English Translations of

Majmoo'al-Fatawa of late Scholar Ibn Bazz (R)

Second Edition

By:
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Kitab Mulhaqat Al-Salah (Book of Additional Features of Salah)

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Chapter on Sujud-ul-Sahw

1- What is the ruling if out of forgetfulness an Imam concludes Salah before completing it?

To His Eminence, respected Shaykh `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz, **may Allah protect you!**

I respectfully convey my greetings:

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (may Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!) May Allah, the Creator, continue to shower us with the blessing of Islam! May Allah keep you safe! As for us, we are fine, praise be to Allah. May Allah keep you safe and obedient to Him! Kindly give us your Fatwa (legal opinion issued by qualified Muslim scholar) regarding an Imam who concludes Salah missing a Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) or two due to forgetfulness. Should he say Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") and begin performing the remaining Rak`ah he missed or not? May Allah, the Creator, preserve you! As-salamu alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

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May Allah keep you obedient to Him! Amen. Please, give my greetings as well as the greetings of my children and brothers to yourself, your children and your brothers.

If out of forgetfulness an Imam offered Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after two or three Rak`ahs, then the ruling is that he has to complete Salah if he remembers or if he is prompted. Thus, if he offered Taslim after the second Rak`ah, he has to resume Salah by sitting down (in the position of Tashahhud) and, then, stand up for the third Rak`ah by saying Takbir. On the other hand, if he offered Taslim after the third Rak`ah, then he has to intend to resume Salah without having to say Takbir. Thus, he and those performing Salah behind him should stand intending to resume Salah. After completing their Salah, they have to perform Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) in both cases, i.e. if out of forgetfulness he offered Taslim after two or three Rak`ahs. It is better in this case to perform Sujud-ul-Sahw after saying Taslim and then say another Taslim. Yet, performing Sujud-ul-Sahw before saying Taslim is enough and there is no harm in doing so. May Allah guide us all to the best understanding of religion and to keep us firm on it! As-salamu `alaykum

warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

2- Ruling on whoever doubts the number of Rak`ahs they have performed

Q: While performing a four-Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) Salah and when I was sitting to recite the first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer), some doubt struck my mind, whether I have just performed

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the first Rak`ah and now sitting to recite the first Tashahhud or I am in the second Rak`ah. Not reaching certainty, I considered it the second Rak`ah, completed reciting the first Tashahhud and got up to complete my Salah (Prayer). Upon reciting Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), I performed Sujud Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) and then recited Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). Is what I have done correct? What is your advice to me? May Allah reward you best.

A: If you so did, believing that was the most probable, then what you did was correct and there was no blame on you. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾When any of you is in doubt about their Salah, they should aim at what is correct, and complete their Salah in that respect, then say Taslim and afterwards offer two prostrations (for forgetfulness).﴿ (Related by Al-Bukhari in his book of Sahih (authentic) Hadith).

Yet, if you are in doubt and unsure about what you have done, then you should depend on what is certain and consider yourself in the first Rak`ah and complete your Salah and then offer Sujud-ul-Sahw before reciting Taslim based on the Sahih (authentic) Hadith reported on the authority of Abu Sa`id Al-Khudry (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾When anyone of you is doubtful of their Salah and do not know how many [Rak`ahs] they have offered, three or four (Rak`ahs), they should cast aside their doubts and base their Salah on what they are sure of, then

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perform two prostrations before saying Taslim. If they have offered five Rak`ahs, it will make their Salah an even number for them, and if they have offered exactly four, it will be a humiliation for Satan.﴿ (Related by Muslim in his book of Sahih (authentic) Hadith). Accordingly, if when completing your Salah you based this on your belief that you were in the second Rak`ah without being certain of this, then your Salah is incorrect and you have to repeat it. May Allah grant us success.

3- Ruling on uncertainty about Sujud

Q: Someone doubted about their Salah (Prayer), i.e. regarding performing a Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) whether they performed two prostrations (Sujud) or just one. What should they do? Should they perform Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness)? When should they do so in this case, i.e. is it before or after Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer)? What is your advice for the person who is haunted by many doubts and insinuations in their Salah (Prayer)? May Allah reward you best.

A: If doubt struck him after finishing Salah, i.e. after Taslim,

then their Salah is correct. They do not have to make Sujud-ul-Sahw. Yet if doubt struck them during Salah, then they should perform another prostration based on what is certain. In other words, if they doubt whether they performed the two prostrations or just one, then they should perform another Rak`ah, whether this is in the first, second, third or fourth Rak`ah. It is preferable to make Sujud-ul-Sahw before saying Taslim. Yet, there is no harm in doing so after it. On the other hand, if doubt struck them after finishing Salah, then this is out of the insinuations to which they should not pay attention. In other words, doubt after Salah does not affect it.

4- Issue on forgetfulness in Salah

Q: I joined congregational Salah (Prayer) with the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in the third Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) while he was performing a four-Rrak`ah Salah (Prayer). The Imam performed an extra Rak`ah out of forgetfulness, which means that I performed three Rak`ahs with the Imam. Should I then complete the Rak`ahs I have missed, which are two? Or should I make up for just one Rak`ah, knowing that the Imam has said Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) without offering Sujud Al-Sahw (prostration of forgetfulness). Being notified by one of those who performed Salah behind him, the Imam resumed turning to the Qiblah and offered Sujud Al-Sahw (prostration of forgetfulness). Meanwhile, I was standing making up for the Rak`ahs I missed but I have not offered Sujud Al-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) behind the Imam.

A: You should make up for the two Rak'ahs you missed to perform with the Imam and then offer Sujud Al-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness). The extra Rak`ah the Imam added forgetfully is not to be counted.

Q: Leading us in Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) prostrated only once in the second Rak`ah (unit of Prayer). Drawing his attention properly, and explaining this to him after finishing Salah (Prayer), he got extremely angry and continued blaming us for about three minutes. Being advised by someone in authority, the Imam returned to offer one Rak`ah after which he performed Sujud-ul-Sahw. Is our Salah valid?

A: The Salah (Prayer) is valid, In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills), so long as he corrected his information, performed a Rak`ah and offered Sujud-ul-Sahw. There is no harm in this. We ask Allah (Exalted be He) to grant us all guidance. Perhaps he thought at the beginning that he was right and you were wrong but after many voices outweighed his, it became clear to him that he was forgetful, which made him perform a Rak`ah. This is sufficient, In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills), and there is no harm on you.

Ruling on performing Sujud-ul-Sahw in supererogatory Salah

Q: Is it prescribed to offer Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) in supererogatory Salah (Prayer) and Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) just as it is ordained to do so in obligatory Salah?

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A: It is prescribed to offer Sujud-ul-Sahw in all types of Salah whether they are supererogatory or obligatory Salah based on the general ruling mentioned in Hadiths.

6- Ruling on an Imam forgetting to recite Surah Al-Fatihah

Q: An Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) forgot to recite Al-Fatihah in the last Rak`ah. He remembered this only after the second Sujud (prostration) in this Rak`ah. What should he do?

A: He has to offer one Raka`h instead of the one in which he forgets to recite Fatihah and then offer two prostrations for Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) before saying Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). Those performing Salah (Prayer) behind him should follow him. May Allah grant us success!

7- Ruling on the Imam who performed an extra Rak`ah

Q: If an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) stood up forgetfully after the final Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) when leading the Salah (Prayer), and his attention was drawn to this, should he sit down to complete his Salah after standing up or should he perform this extra Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) and then perform the two prostrations of Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness)? When should

the two prostrations be offered i.e. before or after Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer)? May Allah reward you with the best!

A: He is obliged to return and sit down if two persons alert him and he himself cannot determine what is right. Then, he has to offer Sujud-ul-Sahw before saying Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). Yet, there is no harm if he delays it after Taslim. It is preferable to offer Sujud-ul-Sahw before saying Taslim if he doubts the number of Rak`ahs he has performed, where he is to base his Salah on what he is sure of, and then perform two prostrations of forgetfulness before saying Taslim. It is preferable to do so but there is no harm to offer Sujud-ul-Sahw after Taslim. Yet, if Sahw is due to a decrease in one Rak`ah or more, or if he based it on what he thought to be more probable, then he should offer Sujud-ul-Sahw after saying Taslim. This is what is preferable according to the Sahih (authentic) Hadiths mentioned in this regard. May Allah grant us success!

8- Ruling on an additional Rak`ah added to the Salah with regard to latecomers

Q: When joining the congregational Salah (Prayer) a person performed one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) with the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who then performed Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) and pronounced Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). The man then made up for the Rak`ahs he missed, knowing that the Imam had added an extra Rak`ah (unit of Prayer)

in his Salah. Is it permissible for the man to count this extra Rak`ah (the Imam added in Salah) or should he perform Salah from the beginning without counting this extra Rak`ah he performed with the Imam?

A: According to the more correct of the two opinions of scholars, if the Imam unintentionally adds an extra Rak`ah, then the one joining him later in Salah does not count it since it was done unintentionally by the Imam. The person must perform the entire Salah and then offer Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) if he has not done so with the Imam. If so, this suffices him. May Allah grant us success!

Q: A Muslim came while the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) was offering Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and joined congregational Salah (Prayer) with him in the second Rak`ah (unite of Prayer). Then, the Imam forgot and offered five Rak`ahs. Will the Salah offered by that person be valid if he does not perform the Rak`ah he missed with the Imam? Moreover, if the Imam performed Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness), should he offer it with the Imam? Please, illustrate this for us! May Allah reward you well!

A: There is a controversy among the people of knowledge (may Allah confer mercy upon them) concerning this issue. Some of them said that the extra Rak`ah is counted with regard to the person missing Rak`ahs with the congregation. Others said

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that it is not counted. However, the soundest opinion is that it would not be counted because making up for a missed Rak`ah should take place after Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). Consequently, when the Imam says Taslim, the person missing the Rak`ahs should make up for what he missed. Also, he should not follow the Imam in the extra Rak`ah and should sit till the Imam offers Taslim and after that he can make up for what he missed. The same is true for other people offering Salah behind the Imam; they should not follow him in the extra Rak`ah if they are sure that it is so and notify him of that and he should respond. If he does not respond they should wait and not to follow him if they are sure that it is an extra Rak`ah. If a person follows him out of ignorance of the ruling or does not take notice that it is an extra Rak`ah, his Salah is valid. As for the one who misses Rak`ahs, he should follow the Imam in offering Sujud-ul-Sahw if the Imam does so. Then, he has to make up for what he missed of Rak`ahs after the Imam offers Taslim. May Allah grant us all success!

9- Ruling on performing Sujud-ul-Sahw

in Tarawih

Q: A brother from Ribat, Morocco asks for the ruling on an Imam who, during Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan), performs three Rak`ahs (units f Prayer) deeming them to be two? Should Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) be offered in supererogatory Salah (Prayer)?

A: Yes, Sujud-ul-Sahw is to be offered here if he intended to perform two Rak`ahs as usual.

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The Sunnah of the night supererogatory Salah is that it is done in pairs. If an Imam stands up to perform a third Rak`ah, one should draw his attention by saying "Glory be to Allah". Upon hearing this, the Imam is to return to the previous position and complete reciting Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer), supplicating to Allah, then offer Sujud-ul-Sahw; and then pronounce Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). It is prescribed to offer Sujud-ul-Sahw both in the obligatory as well as the supererogatory Salah. May Allah grant us success!

10- Ruling on performing Sujud-ul-Sahw for making mistakes while reciting the Qur'an in Salah

Q: What is the ruling if an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) makes a mistake in recitation, where none of those praying behind him corrected him? Yet, he remembered that mistake while in the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer). Should he perform Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) for making a mistake while reciting the Qur'an in Salah (Prayer)?

A: He is not required to perform the prostration of forgetfulness if he made a mistake in reciting any Surah other than Al-Fatihah (the Opening of the Book). If he made a mistake in Al-Fatihah, this needs more details.

11- Ruling on the Salah of someone who is unsure whether they recited Surah Al-Fatihah or not

Q: Sometimes during my Salah (Prayer), I feel unsure whether I have recited Surah Al-Fatihah (the Opening Chapter of the Noble Qur'an) or not; do I have to offer Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness)?

What should I recite in Sujud-ul-Sahw? If it is most probable that I have recited it, do I have to offer Sujud-ul-Sahw?

A: If a person performing Salah alone or an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is unsure whether he has recited Surah Al-Fatihah or not, he has to recite it again before bowing and does not have to offer Sujud-ul-Sahw. If he is in doubt after finishing the Salah, his Salah is valid and he should pay no attention to this doubt. As for Sujud-ul-Sahw, a Muslim can recite the same supplications recited in the ordinary prostration of Salah. One can say: "Subhan Rabi Al-A`la (Glory be to Allah, the Almighty)" and other words of praise.

Chapter on supererogatory Prayer

12- The merit of supererogatory Prayer

Q: A questioner from Halab, Syria, asks: (When Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) was stricken by any grievous matter, he would resort to Salah (Prayer).) **I would like to know whether the Prayer mentioned in this Prophetic Hadith refers to the obligatory Prayer or the supererogatory and optional Prayers. Also, I want to know what is the intention for such Prayer?**

A: The Prayer mentioned in this Hadith refers to the optional Prayer, as Allah (may he be Exalted) says: (O you who believe! Seek help in patience and As-Salât (the prayer). Truly! Allâh is with As-Sâbirûn (the patient).) Thus, a Muslim seeks Allah's Help through performing this Prayer to overcome the grievous matters that may strike them. May Allah grant us success.

13- Acts of worship are Tawqifiy

Q: Should a Muslim perform acts of worship a lot even if there is no religious text urging him to do so? Or should a Muslim do only the acts of worship that are reported to have been done by Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him)?

A: Acts of worship are Tawqifiy (bound by a religious text and not amenable to personal opinion), so none of them is permissible with the exception of those prescribed by the Shari`ah (Islamic law), such as the Five Obligatory Prayers, Zakah (obligatory charity), Sawm (Fast), Hajj (Pilgrimage) in addition to other supererogatory acts of worship such as supererogatory Prayers, charity, optional fasting, optional pilgrimage and jihad. This also includes all the acts of worship reported to have been done by Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) such as Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer after sunrise), Salat-ul-Istikharah (prayer for guidance), Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque) and other acts of worship confirmed by religious evidence.

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14- The merit of performing supererogatory prayers in Al-Haram

Q: Is supererogatory prayer performed at Al-Haram equal in reward to one thousand supererogatory prayers?

A: It is well-known that supererogatory prayer performed in Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) is equal in reward to one hundred thousand prayers, not only one thousand prayers, whether such prayer is obligatory or supererogatory according to the Prophetic saying (peace be upon him): ﴾Prayer in Al-Masjid Al-Haram is equal in reward to one hundred thousand prayers﴿ whether such prayer is obligatory or supererogatory.

Q: As for the Prophet's (peace be upon him) saying on the merit of offering Salah (Prayer) at Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) and Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy (the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah) and the great reward for offering Salah there, does this apply to the obligatory Salah only or to the supererogatory Salah as well? In case this goes to the supererogatory Salah as well, is it better than offering it at home?

A: This Prophetic saying is general as it applies to both the obligatory and supererogatory Salah offered at Al-Masjid Al-Haram and Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy; however, offering supererogatory Salah at home is better and greater in reward.

Q: Since the Prayer offered in Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) is equal in reward to one hundred thousand prayers, can the reciter of the Noble Qur'an look forward to a reward equal to one hundred thousand times the usual reward of his recitation?

A: There is an authentic Prophetic saying on the double reward for the Prayer offered at Al-Masjid Al-Haram, as the Prayer offered at Al-Masjid Al-Haram is equal in reward to one hundred thousand prayers. As for recitation, charity and Sawm (Fast), nothing has been authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) with regard to their reward; however, they have the merit of receiving a double reward. There can be no doubt that charity, fasting, remembrance of Allah and recitation of the Noble Qur'an at Al-Masjid Al-Haram have a great reward, but there are no authentic Prophetic sayings about their reward when performed in Al-Masjid Al-Haram. There is an authentic Prophetic saying on the reward of offering the Prayer at Al-Masjid Al-Haram. Also, there is a weak Prophetic saying on the reward of observing Fast there. As for the Prayer, it was authentically reported that the Prayer at Al-Masjid Al-Haram is equal in reward to one hundred thousand prayers. The soundest opinion is that such a merit can be realized in the whole area of Al-Haram.

Offering supererogatory Salah at home is better

Q: Whoever lives in Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah and offers Salah (Prayer) at Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy, is it better for him to offer the supererogatory Salah at home or at Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy?

A: It is better for him to offer the supererogatory Salah at home, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾The best Prayer a man can offer is that which he offers at home with the exception of the obligatory Prayers.﴿ (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). However, some congregational supererogatory Prayers can be excluded from the general meaning of this Prophetic Hadith, such as Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) and Salat-ul-Istisqa' (Prayer for rain), as the first is offered in the mosque, whereas the second is offered in the desert in the same way that was done by the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) after the Prophet's death.

16- The best opinion regarding the number of Rak`ahs which make up Tarawih

Q: What is the best opinion regarding the number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) which make up Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan)?

A: The best practice concerning Tarawih is that Muslims should offer it in their mosques

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as eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs in pairs followed by one odd Rak`ah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do so, as reported in the Prophetic sayings narrated by `Aishah, Ibn `Abbas and others (may Allah be pleased with them). Also, it was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾The (optional) Salah during the night should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs, but if one of you fears morning is near, he should pray one Rak`ah, which will make his Salah an odd number for him.﴿

It was authentically reported that `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) and the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) would offer Tarawih as eleven Rak`ahs and sometimes as twenty three Rak`ahs. The matter is up to the Muslims, as there is no fixed number of Rak`ahs for the optional Salah during the night, which can be increased or decreased during the month of Ramadan or any other month of the year. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not fix a number of Rak`ahs for the optional Salah during the night. Rather, the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered the optional Salah during the night as eleven Rak`ahs, sometimes as thirteen Rak`ahs and sometimes as a less number of Rak`ahs during which he would offer them as pairs followed by one odd Rak`ah. Thus, a Muslim can not fix a number for the optional night Salah without religious evidence from the Qur'an or the Sunnah. It is better for men to offer Tarawih in the mosque in the same way that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did

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with his Companions for some nights after which he stopped it lest the optional Salah would be made obligatory on the Muslims. After the Prophet's (peace be upon him) death, the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) offered Tarawih in the mosque during the era of `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) and those who followed him until the present time. This is because the matter which the Prophet (peace be upon him) feared, i.e. to be obligatory on the Muslims, disappeared with the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him). It is desirable for Muslims when offering Tarawih and other Prayers to display humility, recite the Noble Qur'an and be tranquil, so that the Imam and those offering Salah behind him can obtain the desired interest. For women it is better that they offer optional Salah at home; however, in case they offer such Salah in the mosque along with men, there is no sin provided that they abide by the Islamic manner of dressing. This is because the Muslim women would attend Tarawih with the Prophet (peace be upon him), following the Islamic manner of dressing and shunning all means of temptation. The Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade women to apply perfume when leaving their houses, saying: ﴾If a woman applies perfume to herself, she must not attend the `Isha' (Night) Prayer with us.﴿ This is to protect men and women from all means of temptation. May peace and blessings be upon Muhammad, his family and Companions. May Allah

reward him the best for what he did for his nation.

17- Ruling on offering Tarawih Prayer before seeing the new crescent of Ramadan

Q: Some Imams start offering Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) before the sighting of the new crescent of Ramadan is declared. What is the ruling on this practice?

A: This should not be done, as Tarawih Prayer should offered during the month of Ramadan. Thus, no one should offer it until the government declares the sighting of the new crescent of Ramadan.

18 - Ruling on offering Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) Prayer

Q: It is said that Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) did not establish Tarawih in the mosque as a congregational prayer during the two years of his rule, whereas `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) commanded it to be established in the mosque?

A: As a matter of fact, Abu Bakr was busy fighting the apostates after the Prophet's (peace be upon him) death. When `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) saw the Muslims offer Tarawih each on his own, he decided to gather them in this prayer as was done during the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him). He said, "If I gather them, it will be better." So, he commanded Tarawih to be offered in the mosque as a congregational prayer and the Muslims continued doing so

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during the eras of `Umar, `Uthman and `Aly. The Companions continued offering Tarawih in the mosque as a congregational prayer, which is better as the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered it with his Companions for a few nights. Also, the reason for which the Prophet (peace be upon him) stopped offering it as a congregational prayer was his fear that it would be made obligatory on Muslims, and this completely disappeared with the cessation of the revelation due to the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

19- Ruling on reciting Basmalah loudly in Tarawih Prayer

Q: A brother says in his question: During Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) I notice that some Imams recite Basmalah (saying, "Bismillah Al-Rahman, Al-Rahim [In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful]") out loud at the beginning of Surahs, whereas some other Imams do not raise their voices while reciting. What is the ruling on what they do? Does the ruling vary depending on whether the Salah (Prayer) is obligatory or not?

A: The Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) / (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet) of the Prophet is to recite Isti`adhah (saying: "A`udhu-Billahi mina Al-Shaytan -ir-Rajim [I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Satan]") and Tasmiyah (saying, "Bismillah [In the Name of Allah]") inaudibly in Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud), whether it is obligatory or supererogatory. This is based on what was stated by Anas (may Allah be pleased with him): (I observed Prayer along with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and with Abu Bakr and `Umar, where they would recite Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim inaudibly.") There is another narration reading: (I never heard any of them pronounce Basmalah loud out.") May Allah grant us success.

20 - Merit of following the Imam until he finishes Tarawih Prayer

Q: A questioner from Sharjah asks: During Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan), Muslims are of various groups; a group leaves the mosque before offering the Rak`ahs of Shaf` (two units of Prayer, particularly before the final unit of the odd-number prayer) and Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), another group leaves the mosque before offering the Witr, a group leaves if there are two Imams leading Muslims in Tarawih, leave the mosque when the first Imam concludes the first part of Tarawih; and a group stands up and offers another Rak`ah once the Imam concludes the Witr. We would like Your Eminence to explain this question in detail. Also, we would like to know how a Muslim can realize the reward mentioned in the Prophetic Hadith. May Allah bless you.

A: All the forms mentioned by the questioner are permissible as a Muslim is free to do any of them and all praise be to Allah (Exalted be He) for this. However, a Muslim who follows the Imam until the conclusion of Tarawih will receive the best reward as if he had spent the whole night in prayer. This because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ("If a man prays with an Imam until he (the Imam) leaves, Allah is to reckon it as having spent a whole night in prayer.") May Allah grant us success.

The ruling on praying behind the Imam

performing the Tarawih Prayer with intention to perform the `Isha' Prayer

Q: A questioner from Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah asks: In some mosques we notice that some people who come after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer and the beginning of the Tarawih Prayer (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) perform the `Isha' Prayer separately as a congregational prayer. This confuses those performing the Tarawih Prayer, so is it better for them to perform the `Isha' Prayer separately as a second congregation or join the Tarawih Prayer behind the Imam with the intention to perform the `Isha' Prayer? Is the ruling on an individual doing so different from the ruling on a group of people doing the same thing? Please give us the ruling on this issue. May Allah prolong your life in obedience to Him.

A: If two or more persons enter the mosque after the conclusion of the `Isha' Prayer, it is better for them to perform the `Isha' Prayer separately as a congregational prayer and then join others in the Tarawih Prayer. However, it is permissible for them to join the Imam performing the Tarawih Prayer with the intention of performing the `Isha' Prayer and then stand up to complete it after the Imam concludes the two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Tarawih, as it was authentically reported (That Mu`adh (may Allah be pleased with him) used to offer the `Isha Prayer with the Prophet (peace be upon him) and then go to lead his people in this Prayer, which was regarded for him as a supererogatory prayer and obligatory for his people.) If there is only one person, it is best for them to join the Imam performing the Tarawih Prayer with the intention of performing the `Isha' Prayer

so as to get the virtue of the congregational prayer. When the Imam concludes the two Rak`ahs of Tarawih, one must stand to complete the `Isha' Prayer. May Allah grant all Muslims knowledge of their Din (religion).

22 - Ruling on reciting

the Qur'an in order during the Tarawih Prayer

Q: If I was an Imam for the Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) Prayer, should I begin recitation from the Qur'anic verse where I stopped reciting the previous night of Tarawih, i.e. reciting the Qur'an in order? Or should I begin recitation from the Qur'anic verse where I stopped recitation during the daytime?

A: It is desirable for the Imam to make the worshipers hear the whole Qur'an in the Tarawih during the nights of Ramadan if possible. The Imam should begin recitation from the Qur'anic verse where he stopped the previous night of Tarawih so that the worshipers can listen to the whole Qur'an in the way it is ordered in the Qur'an. It will be better if the Imam can conclude the recitation of the whole Qur'an in the Tarawih during the nights of Ramadan as long as this will not be difficult for them, taking into consideration good recitation, Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship) and tranquility in the Prayer. This is because a Muslim offers such prayer to draw nearer to Allah (Exalted be He) and display humility before Him, seeking His Reward and being aware of His Punishment.

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In addition, the Tarawih is not just performance of a prayer without submission or tranquility. May Allah guide Muslims to whatever leads them to righteousness and salvation in this world and in the Hereafter.

59- Ruling on reading invocations from a paper during Salah

Q: A sister from Casablanca, Morocco asks: I have only memorized a few Du`a' (invocations); is it permissible to write some Du`a' on a paper to read during and after Salah (Prayer)?

A: There is no harm if someone recites Du`a' from a paper if they do not memorize any. They may write Du`a' from a paper and read it at times desirable for answer, such as during or at the end of the night, etc. But, if they can memorize some, it will be better, because they will recite it with an attentive heart and with Khushu` (the heart being attuned to the act of worship). As for reading it during Salah, it is better to recite it from memory and to make it short Du`a' as much as possible. There is no harm to read from a paper during Tashahhud (a recitation in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) or between the two prostrations but it is better to recite from memory, because it brings about Khushu`. May Allah grant us success.

24 - Ruling on Du`a' Khatm Al-Qur'an when finishing the entire Qur'an in Prayer

Q: Some people reject what some Imams do of reciting Du`a' Khatm Al-Qur'an (supplication upon completing the reading of the entire Qur'an) upon finishing the entire Qur'an at the end of the month of Ramadan, saying that it has not been authentically reported that any of the righteous predecessors did this. What is the ruling on such practice?

A: There is nothing wrong in doing so, as it has been authentically reported that some of the righteous predecessors used to supplicate when finishing the entire Qur'an in Prayer at the end of Ramadan. Also, it is a sort of invocation for which there exists a reason in Prayer, so it can go under all the evidence on the merit of supplicating in Prayer, such as the supplications made in the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) and the supplications made in case of calamities. May Allah grant us success.

25 - Ruling on making Qunut in Tarawih

Q: What is the ruling on making Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) during the nights of Ramadan? Is it permissible not to make it?

A: Qunut is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). It is made in the final unit of Witr Prayer and there is no sin in leaving it sometimes.

Q: Some Imams (persons who lead congregational Prayer) keep on making Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) every night. Is this practice reported from our Salaf (righteous predecessors)?

A: It is permissible for a Muslim to make Qunut because it is a Sunnah (a supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). When the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught Al-Hasan Ibn `Ali (may Allah be pleased with them) the Qunut in the Witr, he (peace be upon him) did not order him to leave it for some nights or to keep on doing it every night. This indicates that it is permissible for the Muslim either to make Qunut or leave it. It was authentically reported that when Ubay Ibn Ka`b (may Allah be pleased with him) led the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) in Salah (Prayer) in the Prophet's Mosque, he would leave Qunut on some nights. He may have done so to teach people that making Qunut every night is not obligatory. May Allah grant us success!

26 - Ruling on Du`a' Khatm Al-Qur'an in Tarawih Prayer

Q: Some Imams who cannot finish the recitation of the whole Qur'an in the Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) Prayer continue reciting the Qur'an not in prayer, so that they can finish the recitation of the whole Qur'an during the twenty-ninth night of Ramadan and then recite the Du`a' Khatm Al-Qur'an (supplication upon completing the reading of the entire Qur'an): Is this practice based on a religious evidence in the Allah's Purified Shar` (Law)? May Allah bless you. .

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A: As a matter of fact, this practice has no foundation in our Purified Shar`. It is prescribed for the Imam to allow the worshipers to hear the whole Qur'an during the Tarawih Prayer if it is possible for him to do so without burdening them. In case it is not possible for him to finish the recitation of the whole Qur'an, there is nothing wrong with him. It was authentically reported that the Prophet (may peace be upon him) said: ❨Whoever does any act that is not prescribed in our religion, should be rejected❩ (Related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith).

27 - Ruling on reciting Du`a' Khatm Al-Qur'an in Prayer

Q: What is the religious ruling on the recitation of the Du`a' Khatm Al-Qur'an (supplication upon completing the reading of the entire Qur'an)? Should it be made in Prayer or after it?

A: It is preferable for the Imam to recite Du`a' Khatm Al-Qur'an upon finishing the recitation of the entire Qur'an in Prayer. But he should not prolong supplication, so it is better for him to recite the useful and comprehensive words of supplication. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: (The Prophet (peace be upon him) liked comprehensive supplications or (Al-Jawami` - i.e., supplications with very few words but comprehensive in meanings), and discarded others.) That is why it is preferable for the Imam with regard to Du`a' Khatm Al-Qur'an and Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) supplications to use comprehensive words of supplications and not to burden people with long supplications. The Imam can recite the following supplication: (O Allah, guide us among those You have guided.) which is mentioned in the Prophetic Hadith reported by Al-Hasan (may Allah be pleased with him) on the Qunut. The Imam can add

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other good words of supplication to the abovementioned one. Similarly, `Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) added extra words of supplication to the abovementioned supplication without burdening people. The same applies to the supplication made upon finishing the recitation of the entire Qur'an, as the Imam can recite comprehensive words of supplication as much as possible. The Imam can start by praising Allah (Exalted be He) and invoking blessings upon Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him). He can conclude his supplication with those that are recited in the night optional prayer or in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) without prolonging supplication, so as not to burden people. This practice was reported from the Salaf (righteous predecessors) who taught it to their pious successors.

When Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) finished the recitation of the entire Qur'an, he would gather his people and supplicate after finishing Prayer. Nothing has been reported that Anas or any of the Companions made such supplications during Prayer. However, since they would do this after finishing Prayer, it is permissible in Prayer, because supplicating is an Islamically acceptable practice in Prayer; it is not a detestable practice. Also, nothing has been reported that the Salaf resisted the practice of reciting supplications upon finishing the recitation of the entire Qur'an in Prayer. Nothing has been reported that any of the Salaf denied reciting such supplications after finishing Prayer. This was the accredited opinion of the Salaf, which both the early and the later generations used to adopt. So, whoever says that this practice is deniable, should bring evidence.

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28 - Ruling on tranquility in Tarawih Prayer

Q: A mosque Imam does not show tranquility in Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) that we cannot invoke Allah, praise Him or be submissive in this great chance. However, he recites the first part only of the Tashahhud (a recitation in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) in which he reads, "I testify that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger," saying that such words of Tashahhud are enough, without reciting the second part of Tashahhud in which one invokes blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him), claiming that such words are no more than additions. As for verses of the Qur'an in Prayer, he only recites only one or two verses after reciting Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an). We seek your advice with regard to this question. May Allah bless you.

A: It is prescribed for the Imams in the Tarawih Prayer and other obligatory Prayer to be tranquil, recite the Qur'an slowly, be submissive in Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostration), and stand completely upright after Ruku` and between the two prostrations in all obligatory and supererogatory Prayers. Tranquility is an essential practice a Muslim should try to achieve. Whoever neglects tranquility, their Prayer will be invalid as it was authentically reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) from the Prophet (may peace be upon him) that: (He (peace be upon him) saw a man performing Prayer without feeling at ease. So he (peace be upon him) ordered him to repeat the Prayer and guided him to feel at ease in his bowing, prostrating, standing up after bowing and in sitting between the two prostrations.) It is prescribed for the Imams to recite the Qur'an slowly and display submissiveness when reciting it, so that they and all Muslims offering Prayer behind them could benefit from the recitation and have their hearts touched;

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consequently, their hearts will feel at ease and turn repentantly Allah (Exalted be He). Moreover, both the Imam and the worshipers should recite the second part of the Tashahhud in which a Muslim invokes blessings upon Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) after reciting the first part of the Tashahhud and before concluding Prayer. It was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered the Muslims to do so. Also, some Muslim scholars regard the recitation of the second part of Tashahhud as obligatory, so it is not permissible for the Imams and worshipers to oppose the Purified Shar` with regard to such matter or any other religious matter.

It is prescribed for the person who is performing Prayer, whether Imam or behind an Imam or even praying individually, to seek refuge with Allah (Exalted be He) from Hell-fire, the torment of grave, the trials of life and death and the trial of the Al-Masih-ul-Dajjal (the Antichrist) after reciting the second part of the Tashahhud and before concluding Prayer. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do so and ordered Muslims to recite such supplications and others before concluding Prayer, such as the famous supplication which the Prophet (peace be upon him) recommended Mu`adh Ibn Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him) to recite immediately after finishing each Prayer: (O Allah, help me

remember You, express gratitude to You and worship You in the best manner.) May Allah grant us success.

29- Ruling on offering four Rak`ahs with one Taslim in the Tarawih Prayer

Q: Some Imams combine four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) or more with one Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and do not sit for Tashahhud (a recitation in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) after the first two Rak`ahs in Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan), claiming that it is a Sunnah-based practice. Is this practice based on a religious evidence in our Purified Shar`?

A: This practice is not permissible and, moreover, it is Makruh (reprehensible) or Haram (prohibited) as said by the majority of Muslim scholars. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾The (optional) night Salah is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.﴿ (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) and the authentic Hadith reported by `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) who said: ﴾The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer eleven Rak`ahs at night, making Taslim after every two Rak`ahs and then offering the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) as a single Rak`ah.﴿ (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). There are many Prophetic Hadiths to this effect. As for the famous Hadith reported by `Aishah that ﴾The Prophet (peace be upon him) would offer four Rak`ahs of the optional Prayer at night which everyone admired

their grace and length, and then offer other four Rak`ahs which everyone admired their grace and length﴿ which is an agreed-upon Hadith, she intended that he would make Taslim after each two Rak`ahs, not after each four Rak`ahs, according to the abovementioned Hadith that she reported. Also, it was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he said: ﴾ The optional Prayer at night should be offered two by two ﴿ as mentioned above. It is a fact that the Prophetic Hadiths support one another and explain one another, so a Muslim should act upon all them and explain the outlined Hadith with the elaborated one. May Allah grant us success.

30- Ruling on recitation

from a printed copy of the Qur'an in the Tarawih Prayer

Q: During the last month of Ramadan, the first time I performed Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) in the district of Ha'il, I noticed that the Imam held a printed copy of the Qur'an from which he recited, then put it beside him, and then held it to resume recitation until he finished the Tarawih Prayer. It is worth mentioning that he did the same thing in the optional Prayer performed late at night

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during the last ten nights of Ramadan. As a matter of fact, this practice attracted my attention as it is widely spread in all mosques of Ha'il, but I did not notice this practice in Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah when I offered Salah there last year. I wonder whether this practice was done during the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him) or it is regarded as an innovation in religion never done by any of the Companions or their Successors. Is it not better for the Imam to recite a short Surah from his memory than to recite a long Surah from the printed copy of the Qur'an. It is worth mentioning that the Imams do so to finish the recitation of the whole Qur'an during the month of Ramadan as they recite a part of the thirty parts of the Qur'an every night. In case this practice is permissible, what is the religious evidence from the Qur'an or the Sunnah that regards it as permissible?

A: There is nothing wrong in reciting from a printed copy of the Qur'an in the Tarawih Prayer as this practice allows Muslims to listen to the whole Qur'an during Ramadan. The religious evidence taken from the Qur'an and the Sunnah stresses the legality of reciting the Qur'an in Prayer and this includes both recitation from a printed copy of the Qur'an and from memory. It was authentically reported that `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) commanded her servant, Dhakwan, to lead her in the Tarawih Prayer and he would recite the Qur'an from a printed copy of the Qur'an. This was related by Al-Bukhari (may Allah be merciful with him) in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith as a Hadith Mu`allaq (a Hadith missing link in the chain of narration, reported directly from the Prophet).

31- Ruling on pronouncing Istighfar and invoking blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) during Salah

Q: If a person offering Salah (Prayer) recites Allah's saying (Exalted be He), ﴾Allâh sends His Salât (Graces, Honours, Blessings, Mercy) on the Prophet (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), and also His angels (ask Allâh to bless and forgive him). O you who believe! Send your Salât on (ask Allâh to bless) him (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), and (you should) greet (salute) him with the Islâmic way of greeting (salutation i.e. As-Salâmu 'Alaikum).﴿ **or an order of Istighfar (seeking forgiveness from Allah) and so on, should they apply it?**

A: This is Mustahab (desirable) in supererogatory Salah such as Qiyam-ul-Layl (standing for optional Prayer at night). The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl. Whenever he recited an Ayah (Qur'anic verse) of mercy, he used to ask Allah (Exalted be He) for mercy; whenever he recited an Ayah of threat, he used to seek refuge with Allah; whenever he recited an Ayah of Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]"), he used to say "Subhan Allah". Allah (Exalted be He) says, ﴾Indeed in the Messenger of Allâh (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) you have a good example to follow﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ﴾Offer Salah like you have seen me doing.﴿ (Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith).

32- Sunnah regarding Du`a'-ul-Qunut

Q: Some Imams (persons who lead congregational Prayer) make use of the Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) during Ramadan to arouse the feelings of Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) and make them weep.

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They remind them of Hellfire and its terrors as well as the grave and the circumstances of its people as they may say: "Oh Allah! Move them from the narrowness of graves and the pasture of worms to Your Paradise, the eternal paradise, and so on." Is this practice acceptable? Or is it an aggressive supplication? What is your advice to the Imams as they compete with one another in making such supplications? What is your opinion on an Imam who recites the funeral supplication in Qunut such as: (O Allah, forgive those of us who are living and those of us who are dead, those of us who are present, our male and our female.)

May Allah reward you with the best!

A: According to the Sunnah, a Muslim should recite Du`a'-ul-Qunut which the Prophet (may peace be upon him) taught to his grandson Al-Hasan Ibn `Aly Ibn Abu Talib (may Allah be pleased with them both): (Allahumma ihdina fiman hadait, wa 'afina fiman 'afait, wa tawallana fiman tawllait, wa barik lana fima 'atait, wa qina wasrif 'anna sharra ma qa-dait, fa-innaka taqdi wa-la yuq-da 'alaik, innahu la yadhillu man walait wa-la ya`izzu ma 'adait, tabarakta rabbana wa-t`alait. (Oh Allah! Make me among those whom You have guided. Make me among those whom You have pardoned, and make me among those to whom You are a Patron, and bless that which You have bestowed on me and shield me against the evil of what You have decreed. Verily, You are the one who decrees and none can decree over You. He who You show allegiance to can never be abased, and he whom You take as an enemy is never honored and mighty. You are the Blessed and the Exalted)) It is also permissible to say the Du`a' which was authentically reported from the Prophet (may peace be upon him) on the authority of `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him): (Allahumma inna na`udhu bi-ridaka min sakhatik, wa bi-mu`afatik min 'uqubatik, wa na`udhu bika minka la nuhsi thana'an 'alaika anta kama athnaita 'ala nafsik. (Oh Allah! I seek refuge with Your pleasure from Your displeasure, with Your Pardon from Your Punishment and I seek refuge with You from You. I cannot enumerate Your praises as You have praised Yourself)) Also, a Muslim can say the supplication made by `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) in the Qunut: "Allahumma, inna nasta`inuka wa nastahdika, wa nastaghfiruka wa natubu ilayka. Wa nu'minu bika wa natawakkalu `alayka. Wa nuthni `alayka al-khayra kullahu. Nashkuruka wala nakfuruka wa nakhla`u wa naturuku man yafjuruka. Allahumma, iyyaka na`budu walaka nusalli wa nasjudu wa ilayka nas`a wa nahfidu narju rahmataka wa nakhsha `adhabaka. Inna `adhabaka al-jidda bi al-kuffari mulhiq (O Allah, we seek Your assistance and ask for Your guidance, and we beseech Your forgiveness and return to You in repentance. We cherish faith in You and place our trust in You. We attribute all goodness to You. We are grateful to You and refuse to be ungrateful to You. We abandon and forsake all those who reject You. O Allah, You alone we worship, to You alone we pray; to You alone we prostrate, and for You alone we strive. To You alone we flee for refuge. We cherish hope in Your mercy and we fear Your retribution. Verily, Your

punishment is bound to catch up with those who reject the truth.) There is nothing wrong in supplicating to Allah (Exalted be He) with good supplications, but it is prescribed for Imams not to prolong supplications so as not to burden people. In addition, the Imam should recite comprehensive supplications such as seeking Paradise and all the sayings and actions that lead to it and seek refuge

in Allah (Exalted be He) from Hellfire and all the sayings and actions that lead to it as well as seeking Allah's Pardon by saying: ﴿Allahumma innaka `afuwun tuhibul-`afwa fa`affu `ana (O Allah, You are Most Forgiving and You love forgiveness, so forgive us).﴾ In conclusion, there are no specific wordings of supplication to be recited in the Qunut with the exception of the supplications reported by Al-Hasan and his father, `Aly and the supplication of `Umar. May Allah grant us success!

33 - Ruling on raising one's hands and rubbing one's face after supererogatory Prayer

Q: What is the ruling on raising one's hand and rubbing one's face after offering Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque), optional Prayer and Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory prayer that was stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet)?

A: Raising one's hands is one of the ways to have supplications answered. It is reported in a Prophetic Hadith that raising one's hands is a way to have supplications answered. So, it is permissible for a Muslim to raise his hands after offering supererogatory prayer or at other times; however, he should not keep doing so, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) would not keep doing so all the time, but he (may peace be upon him) sometimes did it. As for obligatory prayer, neither the Prophet (peace be upon him) nor the Companions did it, but they would sometimes do it after supererogatory Prayer according to the religious evidence permitting raising one's hands on supplicating to Allah when it is done from time to time. As for rubbing one's face after supplicating to Allah (Exalted be He), nothing has been reported about it in authentic Prophetic Hadiths. However, some weak Hadiths allow it, so the Muslim scholars see that such weak Hadiths support one another

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and authenticate one another. Thus, there is nothing wrong if a Muslim rubs the face after supplicating to Allah (Exalted be He), but it is better not to do it, because no authentic Hadith reported this act, i.e. rubbing one's face after supplicating.

34- Ruling on remembrance of Allah in congregation between each two Rak`ahs of the Tarawih Prayer

Q: In our village and during Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) in Ramadan people recite Surah Al-Ikhlas alternately three times followed by saying: Subhana Allah (Glorified be Allah), wal-hamdu lillah (Praise be to Allah), wa Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest), wa La Hawla wala Quwatta- ila Billah Al-`Azhim (There is neither might nor power except with Allah) only once in congregation after each two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) in a very loud voice, a matter that removes tranquility and solemnity. Is there any evidence from the Prophetic Sunnah on this practice?

A: This practice is Bid`ah (innovation in religion) that a Muslim should not do as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾He who innovates something in this matter of ours that is not of it will have it rejected.﴿ (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). Also, Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said: ﴾He who innovates something in this matter of ours will be rejected.﴿ (Related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith). Once the Prophet (peace be upon him) said in a Friday sermon: ﴾And then, the best of the speech is embodied in the Book of Allah, and the best of the guidance is the guidance given by Muhammad, and the most evil affairs are their innovations; and every innovation is error.﴿ (Related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith). This practice is an innovation that was never done by the Prophet (peace be upon him) or his Companions (may Allah be pleased with them). Thus, it is obligatory for Muslims to forsake it and turn repentantly to Allah (Exalted be He)

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from doing this. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾And all of you beg Allâh to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful﴿ Also, Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴾And verily, I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes (in My Oneness, and associates none in worship with Me) and does righteous good deeds, and then remains constant in doing them, (till his death).﴿ May Allah grant all Muslims to what pleases Him.

35- Wisdom behind prolonging the Tarawih Prayer during the month of Ramadan

Q: A brother from Al-Khubar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, asks: "Your Eminence Shaykh, what is the wisdom behind prolonging some Rak`ahs of the Tarawih Prayer during the last ten nights of Ramadan regarding recitation, bowing and prostration and the wisdom behind shortening some other Rak`ahs? We would be grateful, if you could give us advice on this matter. May Allah bless you! .

A: According to my religious knowledge, there is no authentic evidence from the Sunnah on such practice in detail; however, some Imams do it so as not to burden people and to urge them to offer the night optional prayer.

As a result, there is no sin in prolonging or shortening the Rak`ahs of the Tarawih prayer or in offering them early or late at night, but it is necessary

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to observe clear recitation of the Qur'an, solemnity and tranquility in the prayer. May Allah grant us success!

36- Ruling on offering the Witr after the Fajr Prayer

Q: I intended to wake up at midnight to offer the Witr Prayer (Prayer with an odd number of units). When I woke up early, I offered some Rak`ahs of the night optional prayer, but the Adhan (call to Prayer) of the Fajr (dawn) Prayer was announced before I could offer the Witr Prayer; can I offer the Witr after the Fajr Prayer is due or offer the Fajr Prayer first and then offer the Witr Prayer?

A: If the Adhan of the Fajr Prayer is pronounced before offering the Witr Prayer, a Muslim can offer it after sunrise when he offers whatever supererogatory Rak`ahs he can. A Muslim can offer it as two Rak`ahs or four Rak`ahs by twos. If a Muslim is used to offering the Witr as three Rak`ahs and he does not offer them at night, he may offer it after sunrise as four Rak`ahs, making Taslim after each two Rak`ahs. If he is accustomed to offering it as five Rak`ahs, he does not offer them at nigh, the can offer it after sunrise as six Rak`ahs, making Taslim after each two Rak`ahs. As authentically reported: ﴾Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) used mostly to observe his Witr with eleven Rak`ahs. If he missed it due to pain or sleep, he used to offer twelve Rak`ahs during the daytime.﴿ This is reported by `Aishah

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(may Allah be pleased with her) who added that he would make Taslim after each two Rak`ahs. This is what has been prescribed for the Muslim nation regarding the Witr Prayer by their Prophet (may peace be upon him).

37- Ruling on making up for the missed Witr

Q: If I miss the Witr Prayer due to oversleeping, should I make up for it? When should I make up for the missed Witr?

A: It is an act of Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet), if a Muslim misses the Witr prayer, he can offer it after sunrise with an even number of Rak`ahs and not an odd number. If a Muslim is used to offering the Witr Prayer as three Rak`ahs at night and he has missed or forgotten it, he can offer it as four Rak`ahs during the daytime, making Taslim after each two Rak`ahs. Also, if a Muslim is accustomed to performing the Witr Prayer as five Rak`ahs at night and he has missed it or forgotten it, he can offer it as six Rak`ahs during the daytime, making Taslim after each two Rak`ahs. The same applies to the numbers over three and five Rak`ahs of the Witr Prayer, as it is authentically reported that `A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: ﴿Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) used mostly to observe his Witr with eleven Rak`ahs. If he missed it due to pain or sleep,

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he would offer twelve Rak`ahs during the daytime.﴾ . (Related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith)

The Prophet (may peace be upon him) would offer the Witr Prayer as eleven Rak`ahs. According to this Prophetic Hadith, a Muslim should make up for the missed Witr Prayer with an even number of Rak`ahs, making Taslim after each two Rak`ahs. Also, the Prophet (may peace be upon him) said: ﴿The (supererogatory) Salah by night and daytime should be two by two.﴾ (Related by Ahmad and the Compilers of the Sunan (Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) with a sound chain of narrators and the source of this narration is found in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) from the Prophetic Hadith reported by Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) without the addition "daytime", which is authentically related by those mentioned above, who are Ahmad and the compilers of the Sunan (Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes). May Allah grant us success!

38- Ruling on offering the Witr Prayer while traveling

Q: Is the Witr Prayer after the `Isha' (Evening) Prayer offered as three Rak`ahs or as one Rak`ah?

A: The Witr Prayer may be offered as three, five, seven or nine Rak`ahs. It does not have

a fixed number of Rak`ahs during travel or at home. This is because the Prophet (may peace be upon him) used to offer the Witr Prayer when he was traveling or at home. As for the supererogatory Prayer offered after the Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' Prayers, it is better not to offer them while traveling.

39- Ruling on offering the Witr Prayer

and the two supererogatory Rak`ahs before the Fajr Prayer in Muzdalifah

Q: Are the Rak`ahs of the Witr and the two supererogatory Rak`ahs offered before the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer abandoned in Muzdalifah ?

A: The evident meaning of the authentic Hadiths indicate that the Witr Prayer is offered in Muzdalifah, as the Prophet (may peace be upon him) would offer the Witr on journey and at home. As for the narration by Jabir that the Prophet (may peace be upon him) slept after the `Isha' (Evening) Prayer in Muzdalifah, there is no sound report that he (may peace be upon him) did not offer the Witr on that night. Also, the Prophet (may peace be upon him) may have missed it, because of tiredness. A Muslim is pardoned when he misses supererogatory Prayer because of tiredness.

This narration can not be used as evidence of the impermissibility of offering the Witr of the night before the Day of Sacrifice. The Prophet (may peace be upon him) would offer the Witr and the supererogatory Rak`ahs of the Fajr Prayer during his journeys. According to the Prophetic Sunnah, a Muslim should offer the supererogatory Rak`ahs of the Fajr Prayer in Muzdalifah early in

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the morning of the `Eid (i.e., the Sacrifice Day) as the Prophet (may peace be upon him) offered them. As for the Hadiths on the merit of performing the supererogatory night prayers before the two `Eids, they are not authentic.

40- Ruling on offering optional prayer in Muzdalifah

Q: When some people see someone offering optional prayer the night before the Day of Sacrifice during the days of Hajj in Muzdalifah, they deny this practice and say that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not offer optional prayer at such night and even he slept till the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer?

A: This is totally wrong, as it was reported that Jabir narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) slept after the `Isha' (Evening) Prayer at that night, but this does not prove that the Prophet (may peace be upon him) did not offer supererogatory prayer that night, as he may have done so late at night. Also, the Sunnah of the Prophet (may peace be upon him) is fixed in all narrations. As authentically reported: ﴾The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer the Witr prayer while travelling at the end of the night.﴿ This shows that such practice is part of the Prophetic Sunnah. Sound Hadiths in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) and other compilations of Hadith show that the Prophet (peace be upon him) would offer the Witr Prayer while travelling.

Q: If someone combines Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayer while at home, would the Sunnah (supererogatory prayer) of Maghrib be exempted from him?

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A: He should offer the Sunnah of Maghrib after Maghrib Prayer and the Sunnah of `Isha' after `Isha', because both prayers are offered at the same time.

41- Ruling on raising hands in Witr Du`a'

Q: What is the ruling on raising hands in Witr (Salah with an odd number of Rak`ahs)?

A: It is allowed to raise one's hands on saying Qunut (supplications said while standing in prayer) in Witr prayer, because it is considered as Qunut of disasters. It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) raised his both hands while reciting Qunut of disasters, as related by Al-Bayhaqy (may Allah be merciful with him) with an authentic Isnad (chain of narration).

42- Ruling on exaggeration in Qunut Du`a'

Q: What is the ruling on some people who say during Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer): "What is between "Sin Qaf" and "Kaf Ha Ya 'Ayn Sad" is sufficient for us..."? Is it permissible to pray behind those people? May Allah reward you the best!

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A: This is a groundless Bid`ah (innovation in religion) and a Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). If the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) does not perform Tawbah (repentance to Allah) and abstain from this Bid`ah, the authorities must dismiss him and hire someone else. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden)﴿ Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ﴾"Anyone of you who sees an evil action, let them change it with his hand and if he is not able to do this, then with his tongue; and if he is not able to do this, then with his heart; and that is the weakest of faith."﴿ (Related by Muslim in his Sahih (book of authentic Hadith)

43- Ruling on performing optional prayer for

travelers and pilgrims in Mina

Q: Now we are shortening prayer, is it permissible for us to neglect the optional prayers? Also, is one allowed to observe the supererogatory night prayer? Please, advise!

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May Allah reward you the best!

A: A: It is an act of Sunnah (a commendable act) for a traveler and a pilgrim in Mina not to perform the supererogatory prayers with the obligatory prayers. They are to perform Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer in two Rak`ahs and are not to offer other optional Rak`ahs with it or with `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset), or `Isha' (Night) Prayers, whereas Fajr (Dawn) Prayer should be offered along with its optional prayers, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to observe its Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) prayer on journey and at home and the same is true with regard to the optional night prayer, Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), and Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer after sunrise), for there is no harm in that.

44- The supererogatory Salah before Zhuhr and `Asr Prayers are four Rak`ahs

Q: A questioner asks: "I read in some books that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) recommended to pray four Rak'ahs before Zhuhr (Noon) and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers, offering the four Rak`ahs at one time. Is this true? Should we offer them in twos or fours at a time? Moreover, if they are to be offered in pairs,

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is Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque) included in them? Please, illustrate this for me. May Allah reward you with the best!

A: The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer four Rak`ah before Zhuhr Prayer in pairs ending each two with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and after Zhuhr, he offered two Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) but it is better to offer four Rak`ahs after Zhuhr for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Whoever observes offering four Rak`ah before Zhuhr prayer and four after it, Allah will shield him from the Fire (of Hell).) Also, he (peace be upon him) said: (May Allah have mercy on a man who performs four Rak`ahs before Salat al-`Asr.) Therefore, it is better to offer four Rak`ahs before `Asr with Taslim after each two and they are not regarded as Sunnah Ratibah but a recommended act, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (The (optional) Salah during the night and the day should be offered in pairs of Rak`ahs.) The Hadith indicates that one should end each pair of Rak`ahs with Taslim for this is better and coincides with the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) and it is more required with regard to the optional night prayer, according to the authentic Hadiths related in this regard.

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Among these Hadiths is that of the Prophet (peace be upon him): (The (optional) night Salah should be offered two by two.) The Hadith indicates commandment. As for the optional day prayer, there is disagreement between scholars concerning it but it should be two by two, for there is a wording of the Hadith which includes "and the daytime" and this is an authentic addition related by the Five Compilers of Hadith (Imams Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Al-Tirmidhy, Al-Nasa'y and Ibn Majah) with a good Isnad that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (The (optional) Salah during the night and the daytime should be two by two.) If a person offers four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr or `Asr Prayer, this will stand for Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid. Performing four Rak`ahs before Zuhr satisfies the Sunnah Ratibah and Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid and the same applies to offering four Rak`ah before `Asr Prayer and the same is true for the Sunnah of Fajr, if he has the intention of the Ratibah.

45- Ruling on offering the Sunnah Ratibah of `Isha' Prayer before Tarawih

Q: A brother from Al-Dawasir Valley inquires: "I notice that people, after offering `Isha' (Night) Prayer in the blessed month of Ramadan and saying Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]") and Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god except Allah]"), offer the optional prayer of `Isha' separately. I want to know whether Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) is sufficient for these two recommended Rak`ahs.

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Please, advise!

A: The Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of `Isha' (Night) Prayer is a stressed Sunnah and consists of two Rak`ahs. It is recommended to offer it before Tarawih, because it is an independent Sunnah. May Allah guide all Muslims to better understanding of religion.

46- The time of Salat-ul-Duha

Q: What is the period during which we can offer Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer after sunrise)?

A: In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon Allah's Messenger and upon his family, companions and those who follow his guidance!

The period for offering Salat-ul-Duha starts when the sun rises to the distance of a spear in the sky till it comes to the middle of the sky. This is the time of Salat-ul-Duha. It is better to offer Salat-ul-Duha when the heat of the sun has intensified. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾The prayer of the penitent is due when young camels feel the heat of the sun.﴿ The Hadith means that when the heat of the sun heightens so much so that the young camels feel its heat. If a person offers Salat-ul-Duha immediately after sunrise, it is acceptable. It is also permissible to offer it after sunrise till the sun stops in the sky, approximately when it is about

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half an hour before midday or so on. At this time, the sun becomes vertical and stops in the middle of the sky before it slopes toward the west. This time is called "the period of stopping". However, it is not permissible for a Muslim to perform optional prayer other than the prayers that have causes such as Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer on a solar eclipse), Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque) and optional prayer of Tawaf (circumambulation around the Ka`bah) in Makkah. These prayers and others like them have causes and there is no harm to offer them at times when it is forbidden to offer Salah (prayer) according to the more sound of the opinion of scholars. If a person performs Tawaf after `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer at the honorable Ka`bah or on morning before sunrise, there is nothing wrong with them to offer two Rak`ahs. The same is true when a person enters the Masjid after Fajr (Dawn) Prayer or after `Asr Prayer in order to sit in the Masjid, study knowledge or anything else, it is an act of the Sunnah in this case to offer two Rak`ah before sitting for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾When anyone among you enters the Masjid, he should not sit till he has observed two Rak'ahs.﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not exclude a time and this is the preferred opinion. May Allah grant all success!

47- The virtue of sitting after Fajr Prayer

to remember Allah until sunrise and perform two Rak`ahs

Q: How sound is the Hadith: (Whoever **sits after the Fajr Prayer remembering Allah until the sun rises, then offers two Rak`ahs, will have a reward** like that of Hajj and 'Umrah, complete, complete, complete.) **?**

A: This Hadith has some acceptable chains of transmission. It is regarded as Hasan Li Ghayrih (A Hadith is judged Good by virtue of another Hadith when its weakness is so slight that it can be raised through another chain to the level of the Good Hadith) and it is recommended to offer this Salah after the sun has risen to the height of a spear i.e. approximately fifteen or twenty minutes after sunrise.

48- Ruling on Salat-ul-Duha

Q: What is the ruling on offering two Rak`ahs (unit of prayer) upon sunrise, Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Salah after sunrise) and other optional prayers during the Days of Tashriq (11th, 12th and 13th of Dhul-Hijjah) for a pilgrim and a non-pilgrim?

A: Salat-ul-Duha and the optional night prayer are permissible for a pilgrim, non-pilgrim or a traveler.

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However, they may leave the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) and shorten prayer by offering Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers in two Rak`ahs (unit of prayer) and offering Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer in three Rak`ahs. It is reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) never observed Sunnah Ratibah while traveling except that of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, for he used to offer two Rak`ahs before it. Salat-ul-Duha and the optional night prayer are recommended in all cases. May Allah reward you the best!

49- The Merits of Keeping up Salat-ul-Duha

Q: What is the correct and preponderant opinion on Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer after sunrise)? Should it be performed daily, every two days, or how?

A: The preponderant opinion according to the Sunnah of the Prophet is that it is to be performed daily. It is authentically narrated in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) that the Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴿advised Abu Hurayrah to observe three things: to fast three days a month; to pray two Rak`ahs of Salat-ul-Duha; and to pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) before sleeping.﴾ It is authentically narrated in the Sahih (authentic) Book of Muslim also

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﴿that the Prophet (peace be upon him) advised Abu Al-Darda' to observe performing the two Rak`ahs of Salat-ul-Duha every day; to pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) before sleeping, and to fast three days a month.﴾

It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to Abu Dhar when he mentioned the joints of the body upon which charity is due, saying: ﴿Every Tasbihah (saying Subhan Allah) is an act of charity and every Tahmidah (saying Al-Hamdulillah) is an act of charity and every Tahlilah (saying La Ilaha Illa Allah) is an act of charity and every Takbirah (saying Allah Akbar) is an act of charity...﴾ It suffices to pray two Rak`ahs instead of all these required charities.

Q: I am accustomed to reciting the two Ayahs of praise when offering the two Rak`ahs of Al-Duha: (My Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your Favours which You have bestowed on me) **And the second Ayah from Surah Al-Ahqaf:** (And We have enjoined on man to be dutiful and kind to his parents. His mother bears him) **Am I considered an innovator (in matters of Din) or am I free**

to recite what I wish from Allah's Book?

A: There is no sin on you to recite some Ayahs of the Qur'an, so long as you do not believe that this is a special Sunnah, as this has no origin in Sunnah. Your Lord (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (So, recite you of the Qur'ân as much as may be easy for you.) Thus, there is nothing wrong with reciting what is easy for you. However, if you concentrate on reciting specific Ayahs considering them to be Sunnah, then this has no origin and Bid`ah, which is not permissible in Shari`ah. None can claim that this is an act of Sunnah. Therefore, this is a Bid`ah unless there is a proof. The Prophet (peace be upon him) says, (Whoever performs an act for which there is no sanction from our behalf, it is to be rejected.) If your intention is that they are two great Ayahs and you enjoy reciting them in Salah without believing that the Sunnah is to recite them instead of than any other Ayahs, then there is nothing wrong with this.

50- Ruling on offering Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid

Q: If I enter the Masjid (mosque) shortly before the start of the obligatory Salah, should I offer Tahiyyat Al-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque)? Or the Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) should be made?

A: It is prescribed for a Muslim who enters the Masjid to offer Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid before sitting down. Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid should be offered at any time, even during the time wherein Salah is prohibited since the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (When anyone among you enters the Masjid, he should not sit till he has observed two Rak`ahs.) Agreed upon its authenticity. If one enters the Masjid after Adhan has been pronounced, he should offer Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) performed on a regular basis, such as the two Rak`ahs of Sunnah before Zhuhr or Fajr Prayers. This is sufficient and he is in no need of offering Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid. May Allah guide us all to what pleases Him. Peace be upon you!

51- Ruling on the Salah (Prayer) of Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid

for a person praying in the courtyard of the Masjid

Q: Your Eminence Shaykh, may Allah bless your life with useful knowledge

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and good deeds, amen. My question is: Should the one who has offered the Salah (Prayer) of Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque) in the outer courtyard of the Masjid offer them again when entering the Masjid?

A: May Allah answer your supplication and reward you the best. All areas attached to the Masjid have the same rulings of the Masjid. Salah (Prayer) is duplicated in Al-Haram as a whole. The courtyards of the Masjid are considered to be part of it, since they are attached to it due to expansions. Thus, they have the same merit and doubled rewards.

52- Ruling on offering supererogatory Salah (prayer) while sitting down

Q: What is the ruling on a person who upon entering the Masjid (mosque) sits down and performs two Rak`ahs on three bones while sitting down on his chair? Then, he keeps looking to his right and left, behind and in front. Although he is a worshipper, who knows the Qur'an and the Sunnah; he does this deliberately and does not respond to admonition.

A: This matter should be answered in detail: If he is offering supererogatory Salah (prayer), he may offer it while sitting down and he will receive half the reward. Yet, it is better to stand up while offering it. All supererogatory Salah (prayer) can be offered while one is sitting down, where the person receives half the reward. However, by standing up

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while offering them the person receives full reward. If he can not sit on the ground, he is permitted to sit on a chair and perform Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (Prostration) on air. In this case, he is to be excused. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴿ Regarding his looking to his right and left, and behind and in front, this is nonsense. This can only be done by an insane person.

53- Ruling on offering Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid after `Asr prayer

Q: Is it an act of the Sunnah to offer Tahiyyat Al-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque) between the times of 'Asr and Maghrib?

A: Yes, if one enters the Masjid (mosque) before Maghrib (Sunset) prayer, he should perform two Rak'ah as Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque), because this is an act of the Sunnah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) says: (When anyone among you enters the Masjid, he should not sit till he observes two Rak'ahs.) This applies to Al-Masjid Al-Haram and all other Masjids. If one enters

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Al-Masjid Al-Haram, performs Tawaf (circumambulation around the Ka`bah) and then performs two Rak`ahs in Al-Ka`bah after performing Tawaf (circumambulation around the Ka`bah), these two Rak`ahs are sufficient for both Tawaf (circumambulation around the Ka`bah) and Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid. If one enters any other Masjid before Maghrib (Sunset) prayer, it is better for him to offer two Rak`ahs as Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid before sitting down.

54- Ruling on Offering

Tahiyyat Al-Masjid at Sunset

Q: Is it possible to pray Tahiyyat Al-Masjid at sunset?

A: The sound opinion is that it is one of the Prayers that are performed for a specific reason. Thus, one may perform Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque) upon entering the Masjid. The same applies to Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer on a solar eclipse) that can be offered even after `Asr Prayer, since it is one of the Prayers that are performed for a specific reason. This is the correct opinion; the prayers that are performed for a specific reason, such as Salat-ul-Kusuf and Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid may be offered at any time, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾When you see the eclipse make haste for the prayer.﴿ Thus, upon witnessing an eclipse, Muslims should resort to offering Salah even if after

`Asr Prayer. The same applies to the Sunnah of Tawaf that is one of the Prayers that are performed for a specific reason. If a pilgrim performs Tawaf after `Asr Prayer, he should offer two Rak`ahs after performing Tawaf, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) says: ﴾O Banu `Abd Manaf, do not forbid anyone performing Tawaf in Al-Bayt (the House: another name for the Ka`bah) to pray at any hour he wishes during the day or night."﴿ This is because the Sunnah of Tawaf is one of the Prayers that are performed for a specific reason.

55- A question about Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid

Q: Upon entering the Masjid for Maghrib (sunset) Prayer, should one offer Tahiyyat Al-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque)? If there is no enough time to offer it before Maghrib, should one offer it after that?

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A: Upon entering the Masjid, a Muslim should offer Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid whether he enters it at the time of Maghrib, after it, or even before it i.e. before sunset. This is because it is one of the Prayers that are performed for a specific reason, i.e. there is no certain time wherein they are prohibited; rather a Muslim entering a Masjid at any time should offer two Rak`ahs before sitting down. These two Rak`ahs are called Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid. Thus, upon entering the Masjid before the time of obligatory Prayer is due, it is an act of Sunnah to offer these two Rak`ahs, for the general indication of the prophetic statement in this regard. The Prophet (peace be upon him) says: (When anyone among you enters the Masjid, he should not sit until he observes two Rak`ahs.) (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). This includes both the times wherein Salah is prohibited and all other times, according to the soundest of the two opinions of scholars.

As for the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of Maghrib, it should be offered after the obligatory Salah. The same applies to the `Isha' Prayer where one should offer two Rak`ahs after it. With regard to Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid, it is to be offered upon entering the Masjid. It has nothing to do with Maghrib or any other obligatory Prayer. Upon entering the Masjid at any time while one is in a state of Wudu', one should offer two Rak`ahs, whether by night or day or in the afternoon or forenoon. The same applies to Salat-ul-Kusuf that is to be offered during a solar eclipse, whether this takes place at noon, forenoon or afternoon. This is because it is one of the Prayers that are performed for a specific reason. If one performs Tawaf after Fajr or `Asr Prayers, one should offer the two Rak`ahs of Tawaf. This is because it is one of

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the Prayers that are performed for a specific reason.

It is authentically reported that Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said: (O Banu `Abd Manaf, do not forbid anyone to perform Tawaf around this Al-Bayt (the House: another name for the Ka`bah) or pray at any hour he wishes during the day or night.) Narrated by Imam Ahmad and the four compilers of Sunan with an authentic chain of narration.

56- Ruling on shaking hands after offering obligatory prayers

Q: Some people shake hands with those who are on their right and left after offering Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque), what is the ruling on this? Is this a Sunnah (recommendable act)? May Allah reward you with the best!

A: In the name of Allah and praise is due to Allah. It is recommended for a person to shake hands with those on their right and left for the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to shake hands with his companions when he met them and similarly his companions when they met one another. If a person goes to the Masjid (mosque) and reaches the row, he should greet those in the row before offering prayer. Then, if he does not greet some of them, he should do so after the prayer following the example of the Prophet

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(peace be upon him) and his companions (may Allah be pleased with them). Moreover, this establishes familiarity and removes alienation. It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, you will not enter Jannah (Paradise) until you believe, and you will not believe until you love one another. Shall I tell you something to do so that you love one another? Spread greetings among you.) Related by Muslim in his Sahih (compilation of authentic Hadiths)

57- Salat-ul-Istikharah

Q: A brother from Sfax, Tunisia, asks: How should I supplicate Allah (Exalted be He) for guidance in matters which I fear that I fail to make the right decision? Also, what are the conditions of Istikharah (supplication for guidance)?

A: It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) advised making Salat-ul-Istikharah (prayer for guidance) when one is interested in a specific good matter. One should perform Taharah (ritual purification) and offer two Rak`ahs (unit of prayer) and say: (Allahumma inni astakhiruka bi `ilmika, wa astaqdiruka bi-qudratika, wa as'aluka min fadlika al-`azim fa-innaka taqdiru wala aqdiru, wa ta`lamu

wala a`lamu, wa anta `allamu l-ghuyub. Allahumma, in kunta ta`lam anna hadha-l-amra Khairun li fi dini wa ma`ashi wa`aqibati amri fayas-sirhu li thumma barik li fihi, wa in kunta ta`lamu anna hadha-lamra shar-run li fi dini wa ma`ashi wa`aqibati amri fasrifhu `anni was-rifni `anhu. Waqdir li al-khayra haithu kana thumma irdini bihi. (O Allah! I ask guidance from Your knowledge, and Power from Your Might and I ask for Your great blessings. You are capable and I am not. You know and I do not and You know the unseen. O Allah! If You know that this matter is good for my religion and my subsistence and in my Hereafter, then ordain it for me and make it easy for me to obtain, and bless me with it. And if You know that this matter is harmful to me in my religion and subsistence and in the Hereafter, then keep it away from me and keep me away from it. And ordain for me whatever is good for me and make me satisfied with it). The Prophet (peace be upon him) added that then the person should specify his need.")

58- Ruling on prostrating in the Sajdah of Surah "Sad" during Salah

Q: A brother from Al-Muzahimiyyah says: What is the ruling on prostrating in Sajdat-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation) in Surah (Qur'anic chapter) "Sad", as some Imams (those who lead congregational Prayer) prostrate on reciting it while others do not?

A: The Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) for a Muslim is to prostrate on reciting it either inside or outside the Salah (Prayer), according to (the saying of Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with both of them): I saw the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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prostrating in it i.e. the Sajdah of Surah "Sad".) Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: (Indeed in the Messenger of Allâh (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) you have a good example to follow) In addition to the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): (Pray as you have seen me praying) Related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (authentic) book of Hadith. May Allah grant us success!

59- Times when Salah is prohibited

Q: What are the forbidden times during which Salah is prohibited?

A: These forbidden times are as follows: From the break of dawn until the sun rises to the length of a spear, from the time the sun reaches its meridian till its end, and immediately after `Asr until sunset. These are the times when Salah is prohibited according to the reports authentically related from the Prophet (peace be upon him).

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However, it is permissible to offer the Salah that is done for a specific reason at these times, according to the soundest opinion of scholars such as Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer on a solar eclipse), the two Rak`ahs after Tawaf (circumambulation around the Ka`bah), and Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque). Similarly, it is permissible to offer the two supererogatory Rak`ahs, which are regularly performed prior to Fajr Prayer after the break of the dawn. It is impermissible to offer more than two Rak`ahs, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer only two short Rak`ahs prior to Fajr Prayer. When the person misses it due to the lack of time or for some other reason that prevents him from doing so before Fajr Prayer, he may offer it after Fajr Prayer or preferably after sunrise. May Allah grant us success!

60- Ruling on offering the Funeral Prayer

on the deceased after burial during times when it is forbidden to offer prayer

Q: What is the ruling on offering the Funeral Prayer on the deceased at the grave at times when it is forbidden to offer prayer?

A: It is not permissible to perform funeral prayer on the grave during times when it is not permissible to offer prayer except

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after `Asr (Afternoon) and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers, because the time is so long. It is permissible to perform prayer at these times, because there is a reason for it. There are other short times mentioned in the Hadith of `Uqbah (may Allah be pleased with him) in the Sahih (compilation of authentic Hadiths) of Muslim that he (may Allah be pleased with him): ("There are three hours during which the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) forbade us to pray or bury our dead: When the sun begins to rise until it is fully risen, when the sun is at its height at midday until it has passed the meridian, and when the sun inclines until it sets.") It is not permissible to offer the Funeral Prayer during these times or even to bury the deceased during these times, according to this Sahih (authentic) Hadith.

61- Ruling on making up for Sunnah Ratibah after `Asr Prayer

Q: If a person combines Zhuhr (Noon) and `Asr (Afternoon), should he perform the Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) of the Zhuhr Prayer?

A: A: It is not permissible to do so, because it is prohibited to offer prayer at this time.

As for the fact that the Prophet (peace be upon him) made up for Sunnah of Zhuhr Prayer, this is confined to the Prophet (peace be upon him), because when Um Salamah asked him about that he forbade her.

62- Ruling on commencing supererogatory Salah after the Iqamah for an obligatory Salah has been announced

Q: There is a Hadith that states: (When the Salah (Prayer) starts, then no other Salah should be performed but the obligatory Salah being performed.) **Does this refer to commencing a supererogatory Salah when the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) has already been announced or to a supererogatory Salah while performing which Iqamah is announced?**

A: This Hadith refers to any Salah one commences when entering the Masjid (mosque). Actually, it is impermissible to embark on any Salah other than the congregational Salah being led the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer). What is required in such a case is to join the congregational Salah in the state the Imam is in. Likewise, if a person while offering supererogatory Salah the Iqamah is announced, they should interrupt it based on the above-quoted Hadith. However, if the person is performing the second Ruku` (bowing in Salah) or any act following it when the Iqamah is announced, they should complete the Salah somehow speedily and then join the congregational Salah that have just started. This is justified because the remainder of the Salah is less than one Raka`ah (unit of Prayer), so it is not meant by this Hadith. In this regard, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Whoever attends one Raka`ah is considered to have attended the whole Salah.) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih [Authentic Hadith Book].) Interrupting Salah takes place through just intention and does not require saying Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). May Allah grant us success!

63- The ruling on offering optional prayers at Al-Masjid Al-Haram after the obligatory `Asr Prayer

Q: If a person enters Al-Masjid Al-Haram after the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, is it permissible for them to offer any prayer other than the Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka`bah) supererogatory prayer?

A: It is not permissible to offer any prayer other than the Tawaf supererogatory prayer as it is prohibited to offer any prayer at such time till the sun sets. The same applies to the time between the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer and sunrise; when the sun is one spear length high. As for the Tawaf supererogatory prayer, it is permissible to perform it at such time, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Do not prevent anyone from performing Tawaf of the Ka`bah or offering prayers anytime during day or night﴿ The same ruling of permissibility applies to all prayers performed for a specific reason, such as Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque).

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Chapter on Imamate and rules of Masjids

64- Is the prayer offered in the Masjids

around the Ka`bah doubled in reward like a prayer performed in Al-Masjid Al-Haram?

Q: I work near Al-Haram Al-Sharif (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) but I offer prayer in a Masjid near to my work. What is your opinion about this?

A: If the Masjid is in Haram (all areas within the Sacred Sanctuary of Makkah) it is hoped that you will receive the same reward as that of people who perform prayer at Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah). Undoubtedly, the prayer offered in Al-Masjid Al-Haram near to Al-Ka`bah if possible is better, due to the great number of praying persons and to being near to Al-Ka`bah. In addition, there is no doubt concerning the multiple reward of prayer offered in Al-Masjid Al-Haram around Al-Ka`bah, as some scholars are of the opinion that people performing prayer in Masjids around the Haram do not have the same merit and reward promised for those praying near Al-Ka`bah.

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However, the preferable and more preponderant opinion is that prayer in any Masjid in the Haram brings about the merit of the reward hoped for a person who offers prayer in Al-Masjid Al-Haram. According to the manifest indication of reported Hadiths, a prayer offered in Al-Masjid Al-Haram is equal to one thousand prayers (offered in any other Masjid). However, a prayer offered in Al-Masjid Al-Haram which is near to Al-Ka`bah is better due to the large number of praying persons, and to being near to Al-Ka`bah and to the then ability to viewing Al-Ka`bah and the certainty about receiving the double reward when Allah (Exalted be He) accepts the prayer. Still, there is a difference among scholars concerning prayer offered in other Masjids around Al-Ka`bah, as is mentioned previously.

Q: Does the prayer offered in any of the Masjids (mosques) in Makkah have the reward of one thousand prayers, or is that specific to prayer offered in Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah)? What are the proofs of those who support the latter view?

A: The correct opinion is that this reward applies to all Masjids in Makkah because the evidence is general and the whole area of Haram (all areas within the Sacred Sanctuary of Makkah) is regarded as Al-Masjid Al-Haram and the prayer offered in any of the Masjids in Makkah are multiplied in reward. However, the prayer offered close to Al-Ka`bah is better due to the large number of praying persons and also to avoiding disagreement of scholars; although the correct opinion is that the whole area of Haram is counted as Al-Masjid Al-Haram. Besides, disbelievers should be prevented from approaching this place, and the reward for prayer there is doubled just as the reward for prayer in any area of Al-Masjid Al-Haram.

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Q: Is the reward for offering prayer in all the Masjids in Makkah Al-Mukarramah the same as the reward for offering prayer in the Haram (all areas within the Sacred Sanctuary of Makkah)? For, many people offer prayer in the Masjids (mosques) of Makkah, within the boundaries of the Haram, and claim that the reward is the same.

A: There is a discord among scholars over this issue, as some of them view that the multiple reward is specific to Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) which includes Al-Ka`bah. According to them, the reward of one thousand prayers (' reward) is bestowed on those who offer prayer in Al-Masjid Al-Haram surrounding Al-Ka`bah. Other scholars are of the opinion that Al-Masjid Al-Haram includes the whole area of the Haram (all areas within the Sacred Sanctuary of Makkah), though offering prayer close to Al-Ka`bah involves more merit and excellence due to the great number of congregation and the absence of disagreement. However, the right opinion is that the merit of doubled reward includes prayer offered in any of the Masjids of Makkah as is mentioned in the Hadith reported in this regard, but it may be less than the reward for prayer offered in Al-Masjid Al-Haram, which is around Al-Ka`bah, due to great number of the congregation and to nearness to Al-Ka`bah, viewing it and avoiding the disagreement of scholars about that.

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This does not mean that the whole area of Makkah is not regarded as Al-Masjid Al-Haram, as the reward (for prayer offered) in any of it is doubled, Allah Willing.

65- Is the reward for Salah offered in Mas`a the same as the reward for Salah offered in Al-Masjid Al-Haram?

Q: Dear respected Shaykh, I was offering Salah (Prayer) in Al-Masjid Al-Haram in Mas`a (the place where pilgrims go between Safa and Marwah), when a person said to me that this place is not included in Al-Masjid Al-Haram and the that the reward for Salah offered therein is not the same as that offered in Al-Masjid Al-Haram. He provided as evidence the claim that a menstruating woman or a newly-delivered woman is allowed to perform Sa`y (going between Safa and Marwah during Hajj) despite being ritually impure, whereas she is not allowed to perform Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka`bah). Is this right?

A: Mas`a is a part of the Haram (all areas within the Sacred Sanctuary of Makkah) but it is not a part of Al-Masjid Al-Haram, where a menstruating woman should be prevented to sit, though she is allowed to offer Sa`y. Besides, if the rows of praying persons reach the place of Sa`y, they are allowed to offer prayer in it just like other places.

66- Ruling on establishing a Masjid in the ground-floor of a residential building

Q: Is it permissible to establish a Masjid (mosque) in the ground floor of a residential building at times of necessity?

A: As far as we no, there is no harm if there is a need to so in order that Muslims can offer prayer there.

67- Ruling on building circular Masjids

Q: There are circular Masjids taking the shape of a ball, where the first row consists of five persons, and the following rows increase gradually till they reach the middle of the Masjid. The rows then decrease gradually till they reach their fewest number in the last row. Is this way of building permissible with regard to Masjids?

A: I know of no evidence substantiating this act. It is ordained that the Masjids should be spacious and square in order for the rows to be equal. Since this renders Masjids more spacious for people, which is of more benefit to them, they should be level and square. This is what is to be given priority and what is preferable.

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As for constructing Masjids on the model mentioned in the question, I know of no evidence rendering it prohibited or obligatory. Yet, it is preferable and better not to do so.

68- Ruling on money that exceeds the needs of the Masjid

From `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz **to the honorable brother in Islam (...), may Allah keep you in safety.**

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you.)

This correspondence is in reply your Fatwa request registered in the Administration of Scholarly Research and Ifta' under no. 760 date 24/2/1407 A.H., in which you ask a number of questions.

I would like to inform you that the money you receive from the Ministry of Awqaf for the Masjid should be spent in the way assigned for it. The extra money should be saved to be spent on things that may be required for the Masjid in future. Otherwise, you should turn it back to the authority which delivered the money and you are not allowed to make use of it.

As for installing extra electric lamps or light bulbs in Masjids they do not affect the prayer of those performing prayer in the Masjid in case they are used to illuminate the Masjid, as you mentioned. Also, it is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) to direct the slaughtered animal, be it a beast or bird, toward the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer), though it is not obligatory. May Allah guide us all to what pleases Him. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

Chairman of the Administration of Scholarly Research,

Ifta', Da`wah and Guidance

69- Ruling on establishing buildings in the Masjid courtyard

Q: What is the religious ruling on building dwellings in the Masjid (mosque) courtyard for residence, even though it is a part of the Masjid and prayer is offered there? What is required of those in charge of the Masjid regarding this issue?

A: It is not allowed to construct any buildings in the yard of the Masjid because it is a part of the Masjid. It should be set for offering prayer

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when the praying persons are great in number. Therefore, it is not permissible to seize any part of the Masjid in order to establish a dwelling for the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), the Mu'adhin (caller to prayer), the library or the storeroom. This should be done outside the Masjid if there is room for it, and if not then charitable persons are to buy a piece of land for this purpose, while the yard of the Masjid should be kept as an expansion of it.

70. The ruling on using stones from the building of an unused Masjid

Q: What is the ruling on taking stones from the building of an unused Masjid (mosque) that is very old and destroyed by floods? There is also a probability that this Masjid contains a grave. Is it permissible for any Muslim to take stones from that Masjid to use in building their houses?

A: If a Masjid is destroyed by floods or any other reason, it is prescribed for Muslims living in that district to reconstruct it and establish Salah (Prayer) there. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: (Whoever builds a Masjid for Allah's Sake, Allah will build a house for them in

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Paradise) Also, `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: (The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) commanded us to build Masjids in different localities (i.e. in the locality of each tribe, separately) and that they should be kept clean and be perfumed.) Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah through a good Isnad (chain of narrators). It is worth mentioning that the word "localities" here refers to tribes, districts, etc. There are many Hadiths on the virtue of building Masjids. If there is another Masjid in the same district where people can offer Salah, the stones and relics of such Masjid can be carried to another Masjid in another district or another town where they may be needed. The authority of that district where this Masjid is located should assume this task by carrying these relics to construct other Masjids or sell them to meet the needs of the Muslims. No one in the district has the right to take anything from these relics without the permission of related authority. If there is a grave in the Masjid, it should be dug up and the bones carried to the respective town's cemetery, where they are to be buried

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there. It is not permissible to set up graves in Masjids or build a Masjid on a grave because such practice is a means to Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) and has long been a great trial in many Muslim countries, due to exceeding proper limits regarding venerating the deceased.

It was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded the Muslims to exhume graves located in place where his (peace be upon him) Masjid was to be built. Also, it was authentically reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: (Allah cursed the Jews and the Christians because they took the graves of their Prophets as places of worship) It is also related in Muslim's Sahih (authentic Book of Hadith) on the authority of Abu Marthad Al-Ghanawiy that the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: (Do not pray facing the graves, and do not sit on them.) Again, it is related in the Muslim's Sahih (authentic Book of Hadith) on the authority of Jundub Ibn `Abdullah Al-Bajaly that the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: (Beware of those who preceded you since they used to take the graves of their prophets and righteous men

as places of worship, but you must not take graves as Masjids; I forbid you to do that.﴿ . ﴾It was also reported on the authority of Um Salamah and Um Habibah (may Allah be pleased with both of them) that they both told the Prophet (peace be upon him) about a church they had seen in Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and about the pictures it contained. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Those are the people who, whenever a pious man dies amongst them, would build a place of worship at his grave and then they would make those pictures therein. Those are the worst creatures in the Sight of Allah".﴿ Also, it reported in the Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith by Muslim on the authority of Jabir Ibn `Abdullah Al-Ansari (may Allah be pleased with both of them) that he said: ﴾Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) forbade that graves are plastered or used as sitting places (for the people), or that a building is established over them. Al-Tirmidhi (may Allah be merciful with him) added in another narration through authentic Isnad, "Or that people write on them."﴿ These Hadiths and others denote that it is prohibited to establish buildings on graves, use them as Masjids, offer Salah facing them, plaster them and the like of practices that constitute a means of associating such dead persons with Allah in His Divinity or worship. The same applies to putting decorated coverings on the graves, writing on them,

applying fragrances to them and perfuming them with incense as these practices involve exceeding the proper limits in honoring people buried in these graves and associating them with Allah in His Divinity or worship.

Thus, it is obligatory for every Muslim to guard against such practices and to warn other Muslims against them, particularly the rulers as their duty and responsibility is greater because they are more capable of ending such abominable practices. Also, the rulers' lenience regarding such practices and the scholars' passive disregard of them lead to the spread of such evils all over the Muslim world and the consequent prevalence of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity and worship). Hence, the Muslims to turn back to what was done in the Pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance when people worshipped Lat, Uzza, Manat and other idols of the pagan Arabs, claiming - as mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an - that: ﴾These are our intercessors with Allâh.﴿ and ﴾We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allâh.﴿ Scholars adopt the opinion that when a grave is built in a Masjid, the grave should be exhumed and the bones therein be carried to a remote place. However, if the Masjid is built on a grave that has already existed, the Masjid should be destroyed and removed, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade the building of Masjids on graves and cursed the Jews and the Christians for doing so. Also, he forbade

Muslims to imitate the Jews and the Christians by saying to `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him): ﴾Leave no portrait without defacing it, and no high grave unleveled.﴿ It is Allah Alone Who is to be invoked to mend the affairs of all Muslims, to grant them knowledge of Deen (religion of Islam), guide their rulers and unite them upon piety. We thus ask Him to guide them to act upon His Laws, and to be on the guard against all that opposes such Laws, as He is the Most Generous and the Most Bountiful. May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and his Companions!

President of the Islamic University

in Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah

71- Ruling on announcing a lost object in the mosque

A brother from Sudan says: As we have a microphone in our village, is it permissible to use it to inquire about lost precious objects; a lost child, a lost animal, and so on, or is this prohibited based on the authentic Hadith stating: "If anyone hears a man crying out in the mosque about something he has lost, they should say: May Allah not restore it to you ..."? Does this apply to such a state wherein one puts up a paper

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at the mosque's door or wall to announce that he has lost a certain thing, without inquiring about this verbally?

A: Announcing a lost object in the mosque through microphones is not permissible even if the aim behind this is good and beneficial. It is not permissible to do so within the mosque building drawing on the denotation of the Hadith wherein the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾If anyone hears a man crying out in the mosque about something he has lost, they should say: May Allah not restore it to you ...﴿ This is an authentic (Sahih) Hadith. Another reason is that mosques are not built for this purpose. There is another Hadith stating: ﴾When you see someone buying or selling in the mosque, say to him: May Allah not make your bargain profitable!﴿ Mosques are not built for selling or buying or inquiring about lost objects. Rather, they are built for worshipping and obeying Allah (Exalted be He). Yet, if the microphone is placed outside the mosque (i.e. if it is set over a house or any other building), then there is no harm in this.

With regard to writing this on a piece of paper and hanging it on a wall outside the mosque, there is no harm in it. However, it is not permissible to post such a notice on the interior walls of the mosque because this resembles speaking with people and it may divert their attention. May Allah grant us success.

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72- Smoking is forbidden

and it is much more so within Masjids

Q: In our Masjid (mosque), there is an alarm system and the workers in charge of it are Civil Defense officials who work for twenty-four hours a day, and thus they sometimes smoke in a room attached to the Masjid. Kindly advise them on that issue. May Allah reward you well.

A: It is not permissible to smoke in Masjids or in any facility attached to them, for smoking is Haram (prohibited) and smoking in the Masjids is even more abominable. And since the Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade whosoever eats garlic or onion to enter the Masjid, what do you think will be the ruling on smoking in it! It is well-known that onion and garlic are lawful foods, but they have a detestable smell; therefore, the Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade whoever eats of them to enter the Masjid, until the smell goes away.

If the person who eats onion or garlic is forbidden to enter the Masjid, how would be the case with a person who smokes cigarettes, which are Haram and are harmful for them, their family and whoever inhales the smoke.

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Such workers should avoid smoking in the room attached to the Masjid. They should completely give up smoking, because it is prohibited and is evil. It harms them with regard to their religion, life, health and economic status; it is a manifest evil. We ask Allah to grant us all guidance.

73- Sins are doubled

in the Haram of Makkah with regard to their extent of evil

Q: Is it right that (recompenses for) sins are doubled in Makkah Al-Mukarramah as is the case of good deeds?

A: Sins are doubled in quality and not in quantity, for Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Whoever brings a good deed (Islâmic Monotheism and deeds of obedience to Allâh and His Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم) shall have ten times the like thereof to his credit, and whoever brings an evil deed (polytheism, disbelief, hypocrisy, and deeds of disobedience to Allâh and His Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم) shall have only the recompense of the like thereof, and they will not be wronged.﴿ Also, there are authentic Hadiths that prove this point. In fact, the punishment for sins differs with regard to their grossness or slightness, the time in which they are committed - such as in Ramadan and the first ten days of Dhul-Hijjah, and so on -, and the place where they are committed, such as Al-Haramayn Al-Sharifayn (the Two Sacred Mosques: the Sacred Mosque in Makkah and the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah) and other places. Allah is the Grantor of success.

74- Ruling on eating onions or smoking and then coming to the mosque

Q: Why is it Makruh (reprehensible) to enter a mosque after eating garlic or onions? What is the difference between the smell of garlic and onions and the smell of smoke, as smokers attend Salah in the mosque while their smell is fetid due to smoking, but they do not care about this. Thus, I hope you clarify the difference between why it is reprehensibility of enter a mosque after smoking, on the one hand, and entering it after eating garlic or onions, on the other. May Allah reward you with what is best!

A: It was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (He who eats onion or garlic, should not approach our mosque and should stay at his house, for the angels are harmed by the same things that harm the children of Adam.) There are many other Hadiths to this effect. It was also authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded any person having the smell of garlic or

onion removed from the mosque. The reason for this is that the Muslims performing Salah, those reciting the Noble Qur'an and the angels are all offended by the bad smell. Everything that likewise produces an offensive odor is subject to the same ruling on garlic and onions. Thus, a person having a similar odor, such as a smoker or a person having an offensive odor in their armpits, are forbidden to enter the mosque until they get rid of that smell. May Allah help us all to do that which He loves and which pleases Him!

75- Ruling on offering prayer in a Musalla at work despite the presence of a nearby Masjid

Q: As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you)! Dear respected shaykh, I am working in Riyadh in a public hospital. Praise be to Allah, there is a small Musalla (a place for Prayer) at the hospital in which I and my colleagues offer prayer. Also, there are closets and a bathroom to change clothes. We cannot go to the mosque due to our work and to time restriction. However, some non-Muslim colleagues come to this narrow place and smoke, especially at

the times of prayer, even though we have warned them many times but it was of no avail.

My question is: Is it permissible to offer prayer in this place, taking into consideration that we cannot offer prayer with humbleness because of the smell of tobacco?

Second: Should we go to the main mosque inside the hospital and leave the work knowing that this Musalla is close to our work? Please answer us. May Allah preserve you.

A: You are required to offer prayer in the main mosque and you are not allowed to offer prayer in this Musalla. You should fear Allah (Exalted be He) and go to the main mosque. You should rebuke the non-Muslims for their behavior and file a complaint against them to the managers, even if they are Muslims, for it is not permissible to smoke openly or to do other sins. Yet, those disbelievers should be driven out of the Arabian Peninsula, and it is not permissible to bring them to it as the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered that they be thrown out. Moreover, it is advisable to request those in charge to expel the non-Muslims from the Peninsula and bring in Muslims only.

It is obligatory on the managers at your work to prevent them from smoking and from other bad deeds, causing harm to Muslims, and hindering Muslims from offering prayer and the like. This is obligatory upon the managers of your institution, heads of departments or company directors, and they should fear Allah (Exalted be He) in this regard.

76- Virtue of Performing Salah at

the Masjid of Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father), in At-Ta'if

Q: Is it true that performing Salah at the Masjid (mosque) of Ibn `Abbas in At-Ta'if has the same reward as that of performing it at Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy (the Prophet's [peace be upon him] Masjid in Madinah) on the grounds that Ibn `Abbas is the cousin of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him)?

A: This is not true. Rather, it is sheer falsity that has no authentic grounds. May Allah grant us all success!

77- The merit of offering Salah in congregation

From `Abdul `Aziz Bin `Abdullah Ibn Baz to whoever receives it among Muslims, may Allah guide them to follow His Obligations and abandon His Prohibitions. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you.)

Islam urges Muslims to mutually advise each other, enjoin good and forbid evil, and cooperate with one another in righteousness and piety. Thus, I am encouraged to write this word by the necessity of giving advice and reminding of and paying attention to the offense of neglecting Salah in congregation, which has become widespread in some places. This is unquestionably a grave issue.

Allah (may He be Praised), in the Noble Book, and His Messenger (peace be upon him) frequently stressed the importance of offering and observing Salah in congregation. He (may He be Praised) says, ﴾Guard strictly (five obligatory) As-Salawât (the prayers) especially the middle Salât (i.e. the best prayer - 'Asr). And stand before Allâh with obedience [and do not speak to others during the Salât (prayers)].﴿

Offering Salah in congregation is obligatory according to Allah's (Exalted be He) saying, ﴾And perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give Zakât and bow down (or submit yourselves with obedience to Allâh) along with Ar-Raki'ûn.﴿ The command to perform Salah is mentioned at the beginning of the Ayah,

and the command to offer it in congregation is stressed in His saying, ﴾and bow down (or submit yourselves with obedience to Allâh) along with Ar-Raki'ûn.﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) has ordained the Muslims to offer Salah in congregation at times of war. Therefore, doing so at times of peace is even more obligatory. He (Exalted be He) says,﴾ When you (O Messenger Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) are among them, and lead them in As-Salât (the prayer), let one party of them stand up [in Salât (prayer)] with you taking their arms with them; when they finish their prostrations, let them take their positions in the rear and let the other party come up which have not yet prayed, and let them pray with you taking all the precautions and bearing arms.﴿ If it is possible to forgive any person for abandoning Prayer in congregation, the rows of persons who are assigned to defend the Muslims against the enemy are more entitled for this concession.

It is narrated in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ﴾I had thought of ordering that wood be gathered, then I would command the call to prayer to be declared, and I would appoint a man to lead the people in prayer, then I would go to men [who do not attend the congregational prayer] and burn their houses down over them.﴿ Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

It is also narrated in Sahih Muslim on the authority of `Abdullah Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said, ﴾Whoever would like to meet Allah tomorrow as a Muslim, let him regularly perform these

prayers where the call for them is declared. For, Allah has prescribed for your Prophet ways of guidance, and if you pray in your homes, as that negligent person prays in his home, then you will have abandoned the Sunnah of your Prophet. If you abandon the Sunnah of your Prophet, you will go astray. There is no man who purifies himself and does it well and then goes to one of these mosques, but for every step he takes, Allah will record for him one reward (good deed) and will raise him thereby one degree in status, and will erase for him one sin (bad deed). I witnessed that none of us (at the time of the Prophet; peace be upon him) would stay behind from these prayers except a hypocrite who was known for his hypocrisy. A man would come supported by two others so that he could stand in the row. Another narration reads, "At the time of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), we used to think that no one would fail to attend Salah in congregation but a hypocrite or one who was sick. Yet, the sick man would be brought swaying (due to weakness) between two men until he was set up in a row.) He added, (The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) taught us the ways of guidance, and told us that one of the ways of guidance is to pray in the mosque when the call to prayer is made.) It is narrated in Sahih Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that (A blind man came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said: "O Messenger of Allah, I do not have a guide to lead me to the mosque", and he asked the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) to grant him a concession to pray in his house. So, the Prophet (peace be upon him) allowed him to do so, but when the man turned away the Prophet called him back and asked, "Do you hear the call to prayer?" The man replied, "Yes". Then the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to him, "Then answer it".) There are many other Hadiths indicating that it is obligatory

to offer congregational Salah in the mosques, where Allah (Exalted be He) has ordered it to be observed and His Name to be mentioned.

Furthermore, there are many benefits of congregational Salah. Among the most obvious are that people meet and get to know one another, help each other to enjoin good and forbid evil, encourage those who neglect its performance at the due times, teach the illiterate people religious knowledge, aggrieve the hypocrites, and explain the rituals of Islam to people, as well as many other benefits. They can encourage and advise those who miss the congregational Prayer due to no valid excuse or due to laziness, and instruct those who are ignorant. The benefits also include knowing and visiting the people who miss the congregational Prayer due to sickness. Neglecting congregational Salah is an essential cause of abandoning Salah. It is well-known that abandoning Salah is an act of disbelief and misguidance, which drives the person out of Islam. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, (Between a man and shirk and kufr there stands his giving up Salah.) Related by Muslim in his Sahih on the authority of Jabir Ibn `Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him)). Moreover, he (peace be upon him) said, (That which differentiates us from the disbelievers and hypocrites is our performance of Salah. He who abandons it becomes a disbeliever.) .

Besides, whoever misses the congregational Salah commits a major sin and exposes himself to Allah's Wrath. Allah (may He be Praised) has warned such persons in the Glorious Qur'an saying, (So woe unto those performers of Salât (prayers) (hypocrites), those who delay their Salât (prayers from their stated fixed times).) Allah (Exalted be He) says, (Then, there has succeeded them a posterity who have given up As-Salât (the prayers) [i.e. made their Salât (prayers) to be lost, either by not

offering them or by not offering them perfectly or by not offering them in their proper fixed times] and have followed lusts. So they will be thrown in Hell.❳ It is said that this Ayah refers to those people who delay offering Salah. Those who abandon it completely are definitely disbelievers according to the texts narrated in this regard such as the Hadith quoted above and Allah's (Exalted be He) saying, ❲"What has caused you to enter Hell?"❳ ❲They will say: "We were not of those who used to offer the Salât (prayers),❳ .

It is thus incumbent upon every Muslim to observe Salah in congregation in the Masjid at the due time. It should be offered as ordained by Allah (Exalted be He) in obedience to Him and His Messenger (peace be upon him) and in avoidance of Allah's Wrath and Punishment. It is the duty of all Muslims to pay attention to this matter and to advise children, family members, neighbors and other fellow Muslims to do so

in compliance with the Command of Allah (Exalted be He) and His Messenger (peace be upon him) and in avoidance of what Allah (Exalted be He) and His Messenger (peace be upon him) have prohibited.

May Allah guide me and you to what pleases Him and mend our affairs in worldly life and in the Hereafter. May Allah protect us from the evils within ourselves and from our misdeeds, for He is the Most Generous. May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions! As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

Chairman of the Departments of

Scholarly Research, Ifta', Daw`ah, and Guidance

78- The obligation of offering Salah in congregation

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and peace and blessings be upon Allah's Messenger, and upon his family, Companions, and whoever follows him:

I have read the article published in Riyadh newspaper, issue of Thursday, 27/7/1415 A.H. It was written by a person who referred to himself as Dr. `A.R., who condemned closing shops and stores during the time of performing the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers, claiming that this is specific to

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Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer only. Such an article shocked me much, and it showed that the writer lacks enough knowledge about the Shar`i evidence in this regard. Allah (May He be Glorified and Exalted) says in His Noble Book: ﴿And perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give Zakât and bow down (or submit yourselves with obedience to Allâh) along with Ar-Raki'ûn.﴾ This means "perform Salah in congregation". Allah (Exalted be He) also says:﴿ When you (O Messenger Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) are among them, and lead them in As-Salât (the prayer), let one party of them stand up [in Salât (prayer)] with you taking their arms with them﴾ until the end of the ayah.

Allah prescribed the congregational Prayer as obligatory even when fearing (enemies attack). Thus it is much more befitting and obligatory when feeling secure. It was authentically reported that Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Whoever hears the call (to Salah) and he does not come to it, then there is no (reward for the) Salah for him except with an excuse.﴾ Narrated by Ahmad and Ibn Majah. This Hadith was ranked as Sahih (authentic) by Ibn Hibban and Al-Hakim. Its Isnad is also Sahih according to the conditions of Muslim. It is also narrated in Sahih Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him): ﴿A blind man came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said: O Messenger of Allah! I have no one to guide me to the mosque. He, therefore, asked Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) permission to offer prayer in his house. He (the Prophet) called him and said: Do you hear the call to prayer? He said: Yes. He (the Prophet then) said: Then respond to it.﴾ If the blind man who had no one to lead him to

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the mosque is not exempted from performing Salah in congregation, what is then the case with those sighted.

It is related in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿I was going to order that the Salah (prayer) be commenced, then order a man to lead the people in Salah, and then I would go with some men having with them bundles of wood to a people not attending the Salah and burn their houses on them.﴾ It was recorded in Sahih Muslim that Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said: ﴿He who likes to meet Allah tomorrow (i.e., on the Day of the Resurrection) as a Muslim, should strictly observe the Salah (Prayers) when the Adhan (call to prayer) is announced for them. Allah has expounded to your Prophet (PBUH) the ways of right guidance, and these (the Prayers) are part of the right guidance. If

you have to perform Salah in your houses, as this man who stays away (from the mosque) and performs Salah in his house, you will have abandon the Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet) of your Prophet (peace be upon him), and the departure from the Sunnah of your Prophet (peace be upon him) will lead you astray. I have seen the time when no one stayed behind except a well-known hypocrite. I also witnessed that a man was brought swaying (on account of weakness) between two men until he was set up in a row (in the mosque).﴿ .

There are many other Hadiths to this effect. Thus, it is obligatory for all men to perform the obligatory Salah in congregation at Allah's Houses, wherein the Adhan is announced. It is not permissible for the government or any ruler to give permission to anyone not to pray at the mosque,

whether they are shopkeepers, store managers or any others. This is in accordance with the Shar`i evidence, helping people to perform Salah in congregation at the mosque, which Allah has prescribed as obligatory on them, and to meet the description of the believers given by Allah (Exalted be He) in His saying: ﴾The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden)﴿

We implore Allah to guide all Muslims to what pleases Him, to guide them to understand His Religion, to guide the Muslim rulers to all that pleases Him and that brings about the welfare of His servants, to guide the writer of the article Dr. `A. R. to understand His Religion and hold fast to it, and to protect us and all the Muslims from the misleading trials and the insinuations of the Devil. Verily, Allah is All-Hearing and Ever Near. May Allah send His peace and blessings upon His Servant and Messenger; our Prophet Muhammad, upon his family and Companions and whoever gracefully follows them until the Day of Resurrection.

General Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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79 - Ruling on the virtue of offering Salah alone if one misses the congregational Salah

Q: Does 'congregational Salah' refer to the Salah (Prayer) offered only in the mosque? What is the ruling on a person who offers Salah alone in the mosque when he has missed the congregational Salah? Is the Salah one offers alone in the mosque equal in reward to the Salah one offers alone at home?

A: The congregational Salah is given a greater reward. So, a Muslim should be interested in offering Salah with the congregation in the mosque to have such a reward. If one is unable to offer Salah with the congregation in the mosque and he can offer it with some people at home as a congregational Salah, he should do so. And if he is unable to offer Salah with the congregation, he can offer it alone. But it is obligatory for him to seek to offer Salah with the congregation in the mosque as long as he can do so. Moreover, he has to answer the call to Salah so as to offer Salah with his Muslim fellows in the mosque. It is worth mentioning that doing so is obligatory. In case one misses the congregational Salah, he can offer it alone and he is not sinful. If he can offer Salah with another group of people as a second congregational Salah, it is obligatory for him to do so in case he misses Salah with the first congregation. It was authentically reported that when a person entered the mosque and the Muslims had offered Salah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to his Companions: ("Is there any man who may do good with this (man) and pray along with him?") .

80 - The obligation of regularly observing Salah with the congregation in the mosque

Q: Praise be to Allah that many people offer Salah (Prayer) regularly in the mosque during the month of Ramadan, but we miss those people after this blessed month comes to an end. What advice can you give to these people, may Allah bless you!

A: My advice to all Muslim males is that they should offer Salah regularly with the congregation in the mosque at all times, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: (Whoever hears the Adhan (the call to prayer) and does not come to it (the prayer), there is no prayer for him except with (a legally valid) excuse) Also, when Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) was asked about the valid excuse, he said it is fear or illness. (There came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) a blind man and said, "O, Messenger of Allah! I have no one to guide me to the mosque". He, therefore, asked the Prophet's permission to perform the Salah at home. The Prophet (peace be upon him) asked him, "Do you hear the call to prayer?" He said, "Yes." The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Respond to it, then.") Related by Imam

Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith. This also based on the Prophet's (peace be upon him) also saying, ("I was going to order that the Salah (prayer) be commenced, then order a man to lead the people in Salah, then I would go with some men carrying bundles of wood to a people not attending the Salah and burn down their houses over them".) Besides, Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "None of us would be absent from the congregational Salah, with the exception of hypocrites and the sick".

Thus, it is obligatory for every Muslim to fear Allah and offer Salah with the congregation in the mosque due to these Sahih (authentic) Hadiths. May Allah grant us success!

81. The ruling on offering Salah at home without a legitimate excuse

Q: What is the ruling on offering obligatory Salah (Prayer) at home for a person who knows the virtue of congregational Salah, but offers Salah at home and rarely goes to the mosque?

A: Offering Salah with the Muslim congregation in Allah's Houses, which are mosques, is obligatory upon everyone who hears

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the Adhan (call to prayer). Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾And perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give Zakât and bow down (or submit yourselves with obedience to Allâh) along with Ar-Raki'ûn.﴿ This means that a Muslim should offer Salah with other Muslims at the mosque. Also, Allah (may He be Praised) states: ﴾In houses (mosques) which Allâh has ordered to be raised (to be cleaned, and to be honoured), in them His Name is remembered [i.e. Adhan, Iqamah, Salât (prayers), invocations, recitation of the Qur'ân etc.]. Therein glorify Him (Allah) in the mornings and in the afternoons or the evenings,﴿ ﴾Men whom neither trade nor sale (business) diverts from the Remembrance of Allâh (with heart and tongue), nor from performing As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), nor from giving the Zakât. They fear a Day when hearts and eyes will be overturned (out of the horror of the torment of the Day of Resurrection).﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Whoever hears the Adhan (call to Prayer) and does not come to it (the prayer), then there is no prayer for him except with (a legally valid) excuse.﴿ It was said to Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with both of them), "What is the excuse referred to in the Hadith?" He said, "It is fear or illness." It was also related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith that: ﴾A blind man came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said: O Messenger of Allah! I have no one to guide me to the mosque. He, therefore, asked Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) permission to offer Salah at home. He (the Prophet) called him and said: Do you hear the Adhan? He said: Yes. He (the Prophet) then said: Then, respond to it.﴿ Moreover, it was related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith on the authority of `Abdullah Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: ﴾He who would like to meet Allah tomorrow as Muslim should persevere in observing these prayers when the call is announced for them, for Allah has laid down for your Prophet the paths of right guidance, and these (prayers) are among the paths of right guidance. If you were

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to pray in your houses as this man who stays away (from the mosque; prays in his house), you would have abandoned the practice of your Prophet, and if you were to abandon the practice of your Prophet, you would go astray. I have seen the time when no one stayed away from it, except a hypocrite, who was well known for his hypocrisy, whereas a man would be brought swaying (due to weakness) between two men till he was set up in a row.﴿ There are many other Hadiths to the same

effect.

My advice to every Muslim is thus to fear Allah, perform Salah regularly with the congregation in the mosque and beware of imitating the hypocrites with regard to not attending Salah in the mosque. May Allah guide me and all Muslims to all that pleases Him and keep us away from the means incurring His Anger, as He is All-Hearing and Ever-Near.

82 -Ruling On

performing Prayer alone at home

Your Eminence Shaykh 'Abdul-'Aziz Ibn Baz, may Allah protect you.

Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you.

I am a young man in the prime of my life and I have been living in this blessed country since I was young, but I am not one of its residents. Then, Allah decreed that I had to return to my country to complete my education there. However, I am afraid for myself from retrogression and loss, because the teacher is a female Christian or a female Jew and there is free mixing in

the school, which cannot be avoided. Moreover, prayer is not established there except at a Masjid that is very far away from my place and I cannot reach it except on Fridays, (knowing that this happens sometimes, not every Friday). Furthermore, I do not find any of the neighbors who can perform prayer with me in congregation (i.e. I always perform prayer alone at home), and the number of times I miss Friday prayer is more than the number of times I perform it in the Masjid.

I hope your Eminence will clarify the religious ruling on performing prayer alone at home. Am I excused for leaving the Friday prayer if I cannot reach the Masjid? I also request your Eminence to pray for me to be steadfast in my religion. May Allah best reward you.

May the Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you.

If the situation is as you described in your question, then it is not allowed for you to stay in that town or to study therein because of the potential danger to your faith and your manners. It is incumbent upon you to hasten to return to the country which you left and I will help you, if Allah wills, in order that you acquire a good education in a safe place. May Allah ease your task for you and facilitate things for every Muslim. Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you.

General Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

83 - An infirm aged person has a legal excuse to perform Salah at home

Q: There is an aged man who suffers from pain in his legs and because of this problem he cannot attend the congregational Salah (Prayer) in the mosque as it is difficult for him to go downstairs and walk to the mosque. Moreover, he cannot offer Salah while standing as he sits on a chair while offering Salah. Is there any legal license for such a person to offer Salah at home? May Allah bless you.

A: If the reality is as you have mentioned, there is no restriction or sin on such a person if he offers Salah at home due to the excuse mentioned above. He has to prostrate on the ground if possible. If he is unable to do so, he can prostrate while sitting, but his prostration should be lower than bowing. May Allah grant all Muslims success.

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84 - Explanation of the Imam's position on leading children, having reached age of discretion, prayer

Q: In case a father wants to lead his two children in an obligatory Salah (Prayer) but they have not reached the age of legal capacity, where are they to stand in the row? Should he make them stand on his right while leading them, or should he place them behind him and is such a legal congregational prayer? I would like you to elaborate on this matter, may Allah bless you!

A: It is prescribed that he should make them stand behind him if they have reached the age of seven or more, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) led Anas and another orphan child and made them stand behind him during a supererogatory prayer when he visited the grandmother of Anas in the forenoon. However, this person is not permitted to offer Salah at home as he and his children must offer Salah with other Muslims in the mosque, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Whoever hears the Adhan (call to Prayer) and does not come to it (the prayer), then there is no prayer for him except with (a legally valid) excuse. When Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) was asked about such excuse, he said, "It is fear or illness."﴿ ﴾A blind man came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said: O Messenger of Allah! I have no one to guide me to the mosque. He, therefore, asked Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) permission to offer Salah in his house. He (the Prophet) called him and said: Do you hear the Adhan (call to Prayer)?

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He said: Yes. He (the Prophet) then said: Respond to it then.﴿ In another narration, the Prophet added: ﴾I do not find any permission for you.﴿ Also, it was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾I was going to order that the Salah (prayer) be commenced, then have a man lead the people in Salah, then I would go with some men carrying with them bundles of wood to a people not attending the Salah and burn their houses down on them.﴿ Besides, `Abdullah Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "I have seen the time when no one stayed away from it (i.e., Salah) except a hypocrite or a sick person." May Allah grant us success!

85- The ruling on maintaining good ties with relatives who do not offer Salah with the congregation in the mosque

Q: There is a person who has some relatives who neglect the performance of Salah (Prayer) with the congregation in the mosque and who commit many sinful and abominable acts. How can this person keep good ties with those relatives and how can he be dutiful to his parents if they commit such sins?

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A: One should maintain good ties with such relatives by giving them charity if they are poor, advising them, guiding them, and enjoining them to do all that is good and forbidding them to do evil; whether those relatives are parents, brothers and sisters, maternal uncles, paternal uncles, or any other relatives. It is obligatory to call them to the Way of Allah, advise them, enjoin them to do all that is good and forbid them to do all that is evil, with kindness and fair preaching so that Allah may guide them. If they are poor, one should help them by giving them charity. When Zakah is due, one can give them of such Zakah provided that they are not parents or children, but brothers, uncles, etc. One can attract their hearts by giving them charity and advising them kindly. If the relatives are parents or children, one must advise them with tender words and good preaching and exert the utmost effort to invite them to the Way of Allah. Moreover, one should kindly and gracefully admonish them to refrain from their evil deeds. One can seek the help of other good relatives, such as brothers and uncles, to help in this task so that Allah may guide them. Sinful relatives may not respond, but with the help of other good relatives, they may respond to their call and preaching may be of much benefit. However, if they persist in evil and do not respond to preaching, one can desert them. However, one should do whatever is of most benefit. Yet, one can by no means desert parents. Rather, one must be dutiful to them and be kind to them so that Allah may guide them. Almighty Allah (may He be Glorified

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(and Exalted) states in Surah Luqman: ﴾And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years - give thanks to Me and to your parents. Unto Me is the final destination.﴿ ﴾But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not; but behave with them in the world kindly, and follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience. Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do.﴿ In this Qur'anic verse, Allah orders Muslims to behave kindly toward their parents even if they be disbelievers. This denotes that parents have an primary right on their children and that Muslims has to be dutiful to parents and to do their best to invite them to the Way of Allah, if they are disbelievers. As for one's children, one has to discipline them, if advice is of no use, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Command your children to observe prayer when they become seven years old, and beat them for (neglecting) it when they become ten years old; and arrange their beds (to sleep) separately.﴿ Allah knows best! May Allah grant us success!

86- The ruling on neglecting Fajr prayer

Q: Some people who pray in our mosque neglect the Fajr prayer. I have advised them many times to no avail. Should I present their case to the Committee for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice (CPVPV), or should I just continue advising them?

We recommend you to continue advising them and to visit them taking along with you those who call to the Din (religion of Islam) and others. Together you can explain the grave sin of missing Fajr prayer and point out that this is an act of hypocrisy, and then perhaps they will respond to this effort and be guided. It is authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he stated: (The most burdensome prayers for the hypocrites are `Isha' (Night) Prayer and Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. If they only knew the blessings in attending them, they would come even if they had to crawl.) He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also stated: (Whoever hears the Adhan (call to prayer) and does not come to it (the prayer), then there is no prayer for him unless he has an excuse.) Once a blind man who had no guide to lead him to the mosque sought the Prophet's permission to pray at home, but he

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) replied: (I do not find any permission for you) Also, it was reported from `Abdullah Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him), who was one of the great Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), that he said: "I have witnessed our actions and deeds during the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and no one of us used to miss it, except a hypocrite well-known for his hypocrisy", meaning the congregational prayer.

Therefore, it is obligatory upon every Muslim to attend congregational prayer and beware not to miss it. It is also an obligation upon the Imams of the mosques to advise those who miss the Fajr Prayer, to remind and warn them of the consequent Wrath of Allah and His Punishment. If this does not work, then their case should be referred to the CPVPV respective center in order that they handle the matter according to established instructions. We ask Allah to guide all Muslims to that which involves their good and salvation from the Wrath of Allah and His punishment.

Q: Praise be to Allah, I am a Muslim and I always perform the prayers in the mosque. However, most of the time I oversleep and find it is difficult to get up, although I set my alarm clock. I often think of this issue and fear hypocrisy. Am I considered

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a hypocrite because of this? What is your advice for me?

A: You are obligated to exert every possible effort to perform prayer in congregation, and one of the means which helps you do that is setting your alarm, going to bed early and asking family members to wake you up because you may not hear the alarm. Remember Allah's (Glorified and Exalted be He) saying: ﴾and whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make his matter easy for him.﴿ He (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴿ May Allah make your affairs easy for you and help you fulfill what He has ordained.

Q: There is a nearby mosque to which no Imam is appointed. Must I offer prayers at this mosque? And if there is an Imam in it, will I be sinful if I pray at home?

A: You must perform prayer in congregation and it is not permissible for you to perform prayer at home, even if there be no Imam in the mosque. It is obligatory upon those in the mosque to appoint the best reciter of the Qur'an and the best in manners and deeds amongst them to lead the prayer. Thus, it is not allowed for you or any other Muslim

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to neglect the congregational prayer and pray at home. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated: ﴿Whoever hears the Adhan (call to prayer) and does not come to it (the prayer), then there is no prayer for him unless he has an excuse.﴾ The excuse here refers to sickness, fear, or any other legally valid excuse which prevents a man from going to the mosque. It is also authentically reported that ﴿A blind man came to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said, "O Messenger of Allah! I have no one to guide me to the mosque." He, therefore, asked the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to allow him to perform prayer at home. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) granted him permission. Then, when the man turned away, he called him and said, "Do you hear the call to prayer?" He said, "Yes." He (the Prophet) said, "Then, you must respond to it (by coming to the congregation)."﴾ If the blind man who did not have a guide was commanded to respond to the call to prayer by coming to the congregational prayer, then how about others whom Allah made sound and healthy.

Q: A group of employees hear the call to the prayer, but they pray in congregation at the company where they work. Is this Islamically acceptable?

A: It is obligatory upon all men to offer prayers in congregation at the mosque. It is not allowed for them to pray at home or at work if the mosque is nearby. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: ﴾Whoever hears the call to prayer and does not come to the prayer, then there is no prayer for him unless he has an excuse.﴿ Ibn

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'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) was asked: What is the excuse? He said, fear or sickness. ﴾A blind man came to him (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said, "O, Prophet of Allah! I have no one to guide me to the mosque. May I perform prayer at home?" The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "Do you hear the call to the prayer?" He said, "Yes." He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "Answer it, then."﴿ Narrated by Muslim in his Sahih.

87- Ruling on abandoning congregational Salah on the pretext of unclean clothes

Q: I invite my coworker in the service station to offer Salah (Prayer), but he refuses on the pretext of wearing unclean clothes. He says that it is difficult for him to change and that he will pray when he gets home. What is the ruling on his act?

A: It is obligatory on your colleague to offer congregational Salah (Prayer) and it is not permissible for him to delay Salah until he returns home. The Prophet (peace be upon him)

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said: (Anyone who hears the Adhan (call to Prayer) and does not come to it (congregational Salah), there is no prayer for him except with an excuse.) An Example of a valid excuse is illness and the like, but dirty clothes are not an excuse. If there is some impurity on the clothes, he should wash it or replace them with clean clothes. May Allah guide us!

88- Description of how to stand in rows for Salah

Q: What is the proper way of arranging rows for performing Salah (Prayer) according to the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet)? Does one have to leave a space of four-finger span between his foot and that of the one stands beside him, or should one place one's feet beside that of the person next to him?

A: The Sunnah in this regard is to straighten the rows and not leave any space between one's foot and that of the person beside him, but rather to join them to each other without any friction or harm. One should place his foot next to that of the one beside him and should not leave a large space between his two feet taking up the space of two persons' which is not acceptable. Rather, worshippers should stand feet to the feet in order to close and fill in the gaps. The Prophet

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(peace be upon him) stated: (Arrange the rows in order, close the gaps, and do not leave gaps for Satan.) It is reported from Anas that he said: "A man used to place his feet next to the feet of his brother." This means that they used to close the gaps, without any friction or harm. Rather, they used to stand feet to feet in order not to leave any gaps between them.

89- Issue on straightening the rows in Salah

Q: Is it true that the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) used to to arrange their rows in Salah (Prayer) to the extent that they would stand shoulder to shoulder and feet to feet? If this is true, then why did people abandon this Sunnah?

A: Yes, the Sahabah used to arrange their rows standing shoulder to shoulder without harming one another, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded them to straighten their rows and arrange themselves. He (peace be upon him) stated: (Why do you not arrange yourselves in rows as do the angels in the presence of their Lord?" The people said: "O Messenger of Allah! How do the angels arrange themselves in rows

in the presence of their Lord?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "They complete the first rows and draw close together.) Many Hadiths were reported regarding this issue. May Allah guide all Muslims to that in which there is their goodness, and help them follow the Sunnah of their Prophet (peace be upon him)! Indeed, He is All-Hearing and Ever Near.

90- The obligation of completing the rows

Q: A brother from Najd asks: "If the row becomes incomplete during Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) or during Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) because some people may leaving, is the Imam required to ask those in the second row to complete the first one?

A: It is an obligation upon Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) during the obligatory and the supererogatory Salah to complete the first row, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded his Sahabah and urged them to do so. He (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Straighten your rows

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and close the gaps!﴿ He (peace be upon him) also stated: ﴾Why do you not arrange yourselves in rows as do the angels in the presence of their Lord?" The people said: "O Messenger of Allah! how do the angels arrange themselves in rows in the presence of their Lord?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: "They complete the first rows and stand close together in the row.﴿

91- The virtue of perfuming oneself for Salah

Q: The Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) used to perfume themselves whenever they went to attend Salah (Prayer) which is a means of helping one achieve Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship) during Salah. Is it permissible for me, as a woman, to perfume myself when I perform Salah at home?

A: There is no blame upon you in doing this as long as there is no Ajnaby (man lawful for the woman to marry) in this house. Allah is the Grantor of success.

92- Ruling on a woman passing in front of praying person

Q: When we were offering Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and there was not a Sutrah (barrier placed in front of a person praying) before the Imam, a woman passed in front of him at a distance of about two meters. Is Salah (Prayer) in this case valid?

A: If there was a distance of about three arm lengths, then there is nothing wrong. However, if it was less than this, then it would invalidate Salah. It is reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed towards the wall of the Ka`bah and there was a distance of three arm lengths between him and the wall. The scholars deduced from this that three arms is the limit of one performing the prayer without a Sutrah in front of them. If there is a Sutrah, then this would not invalidate Salah, unless she passed in the area between him and his Sutrah. As for her passing at about two meters distance in front of the Imam who did not have a Sutrah, then in sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills), this would not invalidate Salah because the two meters are more than three arm lengths.

93- It is obligatory upon Imams

to pray as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray

Q: Some Imams do the following: When they recite in a Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud), they prolong their reading and apply the rules of recitation.

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As for the inaudible parts of the Salah (Prayer) and the Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation), if one wishes to read the Qur'an following the rules of recitation as reported in the description of the Salah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), you will not be able to complete the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), particularly in the last two Rak'ahs (units of Prayer)?

It is an obligation upon the Imams to pray as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray. He (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Pray as you have seen me praying.﴿ They should feel at rest and complete the recitation following its rules and regulations and recite the Qur'an clearly as the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught the man who did not pray properly and did not perfect his prayer. He (peace be upon him) said: ﴾When you get up for the Salah, perform Wudu' (ablution) properly, face the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer) and pronounce Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]"), then recite of what you know of the Qur'an, and then bow; remain in this position till you feel at rest, and then stand upright; then prostrate yourself till you feel at rest in prostration, and then sit up till you feel at rest while sitting; and then prostrate yourself again till you feel at rest in prostration; then stand and repeat these posititions in all your Salah.﴿

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Therefore, Imams must be mindful to complete and perfect the Salah, making their recitation very clear without missing Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) or letters so that those behind them will benefit from the recitation. Thus, in the first two Rak'ahs of the Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers, and in Fajr (Dawn) Prayer and Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer, they should recite the Qur'an audibly in order to benefit those praying behind them. They should not recite quickly; rather slowly stopping at the end of each Ayah as the Prophet (peace be upon him) use to do, so that those behind them will understand and benefit from the recitation. As for Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer), they should listen attentively to the recitation of the Imam and recite Surah Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an). Ma'mums should recite Surah Al-Fatihah, even if the Imam has started the recitation of another part from the Qur'an, and then listen to the Imam because they are commanded to do so by the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in which he states: ﴾Perhaps you recite behind your Imam?" We said: "Yes, it is so, O Messenger of Allah." He said: "Do not do that except with the Opening of the Book (i.e. Surah Al-Fatihah); for there is no Salah for one who does not recite it in their Salah.﴿ This command is general in the Jahri and Sirri Salahs. Ma`mums should recite Surah Al-Fatihah, but if one joins Salah and the Imam is bowing, then this Rak'ah will

be counted and one need not recite Surah Al-Fatihah. The same ruling applies to one who forgets to recite Surah Al-Fatihah or is ignorant of this ruling thinking that it is not an obligation upon those behind the Imam to recite Surah Al-Fatihah, and thus, their Salah is valid. However, the one praying individually, as well as the Imam, must recite Surah Al-Fatihah because for them it is a pillar of Salah which cannot be overlooked whether out of ignorance or forgetfulness; rather, they need to recite

it.

As for Ma'mums, it is flexible; namely, they must recite Surah Al-Fatihah, but if one does not recite it out of ignorance or forgetfulness or joins the Imam while he is bowing, then this Rak'ah will be counted, praise be to Allah. It is also an obligation upon the Imam to feel at rest in the last two Rak'ahs of the `Isha' Prayer, the Zhuhr (Noon) and the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers and in the third Rak'ah of the Maghrib Prayer. He must feel at rest and not hasten in order to give Ma'mums enough time to recite Surah Al-Fatihah in these Rak'ahs. He has to recite slowly following the rules of recitation so that those behind him will have enough time to recite Surah Al-Fatihah because people differ in their speed of recitation. Therefore, the Imam should consider status of the Ma`mums and not hasten the Salah as it is an obligation upon those behind the Imam to recite Surah Al-Fatihah and complete it in a perfect and consecutive recitation so that they might not miss Surah Al-Fatihah. There are some who interrupt their recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah; namely, they make long pauses in their recitation. There is no justification for this act; rather, they should recite it in a continuous manner so that they will complete the recitation before the Imam bows.

94- Warning against

an Imam's embellishing his voice when reciting the Qur'an for the sake of gaining people's praise

Q: What can on get rid of the absence of Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship) and the feeling of imperfection of Salah (Prayer), as I lead the people of my area in the the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers, praise be to Allah? Whenever I try to ensure my memorization of the Qur'an and read it in the Salah following

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its rules of recitation, I feel that I am showing off, particularly during the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud), as I embellish my voice and prolong my recitation to the point that I feel I am doing so in order to give people the impression that I am qualified to be their Imam. What is the ruling on this regard?

A: Dear brother, you should continue leading the people in Salah and seek Allah's help and guidance to grant you sincerity and seek His refuge from showing off. Have the glad tidings of goodness and set aside the whisperings of Satan which make you imagine that beautifying your voice is showing off with the recitation of the Qur'an, or that you seek people' praise and want them to acknowledge your qualification to be an Imam. Set aside all these whisperings and have the glad tidings of goodness. Moreover, you have been commanded to embellish your voice when reciting the Qur'an in the Salah so that those praying behind you will benefit from your recitation. There is no blame on you with regards to the whisperings which arise in you; rather, you should resist them by seeking refuge in Allah against Satan and asking Him for success, guidance and help to abide by goodness. You are performing great righteous deeds, and therefore, continue in your leading of the Salah, be kind and gentle to your brothers and exert every effort to beautify your voice when reciting the Qur'an. It was reported from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) that he stated: ﴾He is not of us, who does not intone the Qur'an (i.e., recites it in a melodious voice) and recite it aloud.﴿ It refers to intoning the recitation of the Qur'an as it is one of the great means of pondering and reflecting over it, understanding its meanings and concepts and enjoying listening to it. In the authentic Hadith it is reported that

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the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Allah does not listen to anything as He listens to the recitation of the Qur'an by a Prophet who recites it in a attractive, audible sweet sounding voice.﴿ It means that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) does not listen to anything like His listening to a Prophet. It is the type of listening befitting Allah Alone, not like the listening of the creatures, since the Attributes of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) are befitting Him Alone and are not similar to any of His creatures. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.﴿ However, what is reported in the preceding Haith is evidence that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) likes the embellishing of the voice when reciting the Qur'an and He

wants reciters to do their best to intone the recitation of the Qur'an in order to benefit themselves and those who listen to their recitation. What invades your thoughts regarding the possibility of your showing off is from the whisperings of the Satan, and hence, do not pay attention to it and resist the enemy of Allah by seeking Allah's refuge continuing to embellish your voice and improving your recitation accompanied by concentration in your bowing down, your prostration, and all positions and actions of the Salah. In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills), you are following the proper and righteous way. We ask Allah to grant us and you success and firmness in abiding by the truth.

95- Ruling on an Imam's delegating another Imam

Q: I hope Your Eminence will explain the Islamic ruling on an Imam's delegating other Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and memorizers of the Qur'an to lead Salah (Prayer) in his stead. It should be noted that the delegating Imam does not attend except on Fridays due to other commitments, while he receives a monthly salary for his job as the Imam and gives part of it to the delegated Imam. May Allah reward you with the best reward!

A: It is my opinion that it is not permissible for this Imam to do what the questioner mentioned except with the permission of the authority concerned. He should explain to those in charge that he has other work and cannot attend except on such and such day or on Fridays only. If they give him the permission to delegate others, then it is permissible for him to delegate whomever he thinks is as qualified as him or better than him in leading the Salah, reading the Qur'an and knowledge so that the delegated Imam will be able to undertake all his responsibilities. As for the Imam's receiving a salary and delegating another to undertake his responsibilities, it is not allowed except with the permission of those in charge. If they allow him and he appoints one who will be able to perform all his duties, then there is no harm in doing that.

96- Ruling on praying behind an Imam who does not proficient in reciting the Qur'an

Question: What is the opinion of His Eminence regarding offering prayer behind an Imam who does not proficiently recite the Qur'an, taking into consideration that there is no one in the village who is better than him in reciting the Qur'an except during the holidays and vacations when some of the knowledgeable people return to the village? It should be noted that this Imam is the full time Imam of the Masjid and there is a Qur'an memorization school nearby which I advised him to attend, but he has not done so. Please provide us with a beneficial answer?

A: If there are no grammatical mistakes in his recitation which change the meaning, then there is no harm in praying behind him. For example, if he recites this Ayah (verse): Al-Hamdu Lillahi Rabbil-'Alameen (Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds) and he reads the letter (Ba' ب) with the vowel (Fat-hah [vowel point that sounds like "a"] فتحة) on it instead of the vowel (Kasrah [vowel point that sounds like "i"] كسرة), and thus, reads it as follows: Al-Hamdu Lillahi Rabbal-'Alameen or he recites this Ayah: Ar-Rahmanir-Raheem (The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful) and he reads the letter (Nun ن) with the vowel Fat-hah on it instead of the vowel Kasrah, and thus, reads it as follows: Ar-Rahmanar-Raheem, or with the vowel (Dammah [vowel point that sounds like "u"] ضمة) on the letter (Nun ن) instead of the vowel Kasrah, and thus, reads it as follows: Ar-Rahmanur-Raheem, then there is no harm in this. If his recitation changes the meaning, then this should be explained to him and he should be taught and guided until he corrects his recitation. If he makes mistakes while reciting during Salah, he should be corrected. Moreover, he should be encouraged to attend the Qur'an memorization school so that his recitation might be improved and corrected. Allah is Grantor of help.

97- Ruling on praying behind who attends celebrations for Awliya'

Q: In our village, there is an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who attends all the celebrations held for the Awliya' (pious people) and at shrines. However, he does not believe in them in a way which harms his belief in Allah. He merely attends such celebrations to avoid people's criticisms. Is it allowed to offer Salah (Prayer) behind him, taking into consideration that there is no nearby Masjid (mosque) in which there is a Sunni Salafy Imam (i.e. following the Sunnah and the righteous predecessors) whom we can pray behind? Also, if we do not pray behind this Imam, perhaps people will renounce our Salafy way and call, and we are very small in number and they might harm us. Please advise and guide us.

A: If he attends the gatherings held for the Awliya' and the meetings of Mubtadi`s (people who introduce innovations in religion), then this is clear indulgence of their actions and an indication that he does not deny their evil practices. Therefore, such a person is not qualified to be an Imam and should not be considered an Imam, and no one should pray behind him; rather, he should be abandoned because it is an obligation upon those who attend the gatherings of evil to deny them; otherwise, he must stay away from them. If he is in the habit of attending the gatherings and meetings

of Mubtadi`s, grave worshippers, and the celebrations held for the Awliya', he should be guided and should be advised not to attend them, but deny such gatherings and celebrations, advise those holding such celebrations and stay away from them because doing so is an evil act. Celebrating the birthday of the Prophet (peace be upon him) or the birthdays of the Awliya', the innovations committed at the graves like seeking blessings from the dead and reading the Qur'an or offering Salah over graves are all evil Bid`ah (innovation in religion) which lead to Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) which occurs when seeking blessings from the deceased, calling upon them besides Allah, and this is major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam).

Therefore, it is an obligation upon a believing servant to fear Allah, to deny the evil actions of these Mubtadi`s , not to attend with them such celebrations, not to meet with them and not to be in their gatherings except as to deny of their evil actions and warn against them. Gathering to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) or Awliya', or to glorify a grave or the like are all evil innovations in Islam. The Messenger (peace be upon him), the master of the children of Adam and the chief advisor, did not celebrate his birthday even once in his lifetime and never gathered the people to celebrate it. Such celebrations were neither conducted by Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq, 'Umar, `Uthman, 'Ali, the rest of the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet), nor by Salaf (righteous predecessors). This practice was started during the fourth century by some Shi`ah (Shi'ites) who were imitated by some ignorant Muslims. Thus, celebrating the birthday of the Prophet

(peace be upon him) and the birthdays of the Awliya' are all evil Bid`ah which lead to Shirk and extremism. The same danger results from gatherings at graves, reciting Qur'an or praying by them; or calling upon their dwellers seeking to get closer to Allah by such gatherings, supplications and raising hands there beseeching for their help. All such actions are

innovations in Islam. There is nothing wrong with visiting graves and greeting the deceased with Salam (Islamic greeting of peace) in the manner prescribed in Shari`ah (Islamic law) even though the person raises their hands to supplicate for them.

98- Ruling on offering Salah being led by an Imam who is juggler

Question: Is it permissible to offer Salah (Prayer) being led by an Imam who is juggler, bearing in mind that some of them recite the Qur'an properly? Please instruct us, may Allah reward you with the best!

A: If an Imam is a sorcerer in the sense that he claims to know future events, practices sorcery or works out evil actions, it will be permissible neither to appoint him as an Imam nor offer Salah being led by him. No doubt, he who claims to have knowledge of future events is a disbeliever (we ask Allah to grant us well-being). Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He) said: (Say: "None in the heavens and the earth knows the Ghaib (Unseen) except Allâh") Thus, one who practices sorcery is judged as a disbeliever. Allah (Exalted be He) said: (And they followed what the Shayâteen (devils) gave out (falsely of magic) in the lifetime of Sulaimân (Solomon). Sulaimân did not disbelieve, but the Shayâteen (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Hârût and Mârût; but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they said, "We are only a trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us).") (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:101.)However, if by juggler

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you mean that he just commits sins or mistakes but does not practice acts of Kufr (disbelief) such as sorcery and claiming the knowledge of future events, it will be permissible to offer Salah being led by him. Nevertheless, it is still better to appoint another Imam who is just and upright in order to be on the safe side and reconcile divergent views maintained by scholars on this issue, because some scholars do not allow offering Salah while led by such an Imam.

As for sinners, they should not be appointed as Imams; however, if they happen to lead the Salah, the Salah of those led by them is valid because people may be forced by authority or under certain circumstances to be led by them. As for one who invokes other than Allah or asks the dead for help, seeks their support and assistance, it is impermissible to offer Salah being led by him because by doing so such a person is judged to be a disbeliever. Doing such acts, Mushriks (those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) deserved to be fought against by the Prophet (peace be upon him) in Makkah and elsewhere. We ask Allah to set right the affairs of Muslims, to grant them understanding of their religion and to make the best amongst them take charge of their affairs. Indeed, He is All Hearing and Ever Near.

99- Ruling on praying behind who beseeches others beside Allah for help

Q: What is your opinion regarding offering Salah (Prayer) behind an Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) who beseeches others beside Allah for help and being forced to pray at home in order to avoid praying behind such Imams?

A: There is no doubt that praying behind such Imams is not valid because of their involvement in Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship), however, people like you should not pray at home and miss congregational Salah. Rather, you should pray in other Masjids (mosques) or you and other monotheists may offer Salah before or after their prayer in the same Masjid as an expression of your rejection of their acts, if it is possible to do so without causing Fitnah (sedition). As for your hearing some brothers' narrating from the mother of the believers her statement: The believer's Salah behind the hypocrite will not invalidate the believer's Salah, as the hypocrite's prayer behind the believer will not validate the hypocrite's prayer, and your question about the authenticity of this narration; I do not have any information about it and I do not think it is an authentic narration or statement of the mother of the believers. Nevertheless, even if it is authentic, then we should understand it properly. A believer's prayer behind a hypocrite will not invalidate the believer's prayer as long as he does not know that he is a hypocrite.

100- Ruling on offering Salah behind an Imam who shaves his beard

Q: There is an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who shaves his beard and I always perform Salah (Prayer) behind him though I know he shaves. Is my Salah behind him valid? Please support your answer with evidence, may Allah reward you!

A: Undoubtedly, shaving the beard is a sin because it is authentically reported from Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) that he stated: ﴾Trim closely the moustaches, and let the beards grow to be contradictory to Mushriks (those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship).﴿ Agreed upon its authenticity. He (peace be upon him) also stated: ﴾Trim closely the moustaches, and let the beards grow to be contradictory to Mushriks.﴿ (Related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih) He (peace be upon him) also stated: ﴾Trim closely the moustaches, and let the beards grow to be contradictory to the fire-worshippers.﴿ (Related by Muslim in his Sahih).

All these Sahih (authentic) Hadiths and others indicate the obligation of growing beard, letting it grow long, and the prohibition of shaving

and trimming it. They also refer to the obligation of trimming the moustaches, cutting them, and shortening them. It is reported from Abu Muhammad ibn Hazm that he said: "Scholars have unanimously agreed that letting the beard grow and trimming the moustache is an issue taken for granted and it is not expected from the reasonable person and the Muslim to imitate those who shave their beards. Those who shave their beards are not good examples to be followed; and therefore, they should not be considered as good examples even though they may be many in numbers. Allah, the Almighty, states: ﴾And if you obey most of those on the earth, they will mislead you far away from Allâh's Path.﴿ A Mu'min (believer) should be careful and follow the example of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), the example of his honorable Sahabah and those who followed them in piety and righteousness. As for those who opposed the way of the righteous predecessors, they are not considered good examples. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾Indeed in the Messenger of Allâh (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) you have a good example to follow﴿ And: ﴾He who obeys the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), has indeed obeyed Allâh﴿ And: ﴾And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it).﴿

There are many other Ayahs revealed regarding this meaning. Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾All my Ummah (nation based on creed) will enter Jannah (Paradise) except those who refuse." It was said: "And who will refuse to enter Paradise O Messenger of Allah?"

He replied: "Whoever obeys me will enter Paradise, and whoever disobeys me has refused.﴿

(Related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (authentic) book of Hadith). We ask Allah to guide us and all Muslims to follow His legislation and to abide by what was brought by His Prophet (peace be upon him) and save us from the obedience of our whims and Satan.

Q: Is it permissible to offer Salah (Prayer) behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who shaves his beard?

A: According to the preponderant opinion of scholars, performing Salah behind him and all sinners is valid because he is a sinner and not a disbeliever. Many of the scholars considered performing Salah behind the defiantly disobedient person, such as one who shaves his beard, one who drinks intoxicants, one who disobeys his parents, one who devours usury, one who backbites or carries tales and similar sins to be valid; while other scholars considered Salah behind them to be invalid. However, the preponderant opinion is that Salah behind them is valid as long as they are not judged as Kafirs (disbelievers) because it is not allowed to pray behind a Kafir known by Kufr (disbelief) as the person who curses Islam. Similarly, one is not to perform Salah behind a person known to be a communist, socialist or a nationalist who is known to fight against Islam. The same ruling applies to a known Qadianiy (affiliate of a deviant sect who believe that there is a prophet after our Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him) or one known for that which renders him a Kafir; or by what takes him out of the fold of Islam. But, according to the preponderant opinion, it is allowed to perform Salah behind disobedient person who is unkind to his parents,

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shaves his beard, deals in usury etc., because those of the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) who lived during the reign of Al-Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf Al-Thaqafy, the most defiantly disobedient and unjust ruler of that time, prayed behind him in `Arafat and Muzdalifah. They presented as evidence the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) regarding rulers: (They will lead you in Salah; if they are righteous, the blessings of their righteousness will be for you and them and if they are unrighteous, the evils of their unrighteousness will be against them only.) Therefore, the correct opinion is that a believer is to pray behind the rulers and Imams of the Muslims even though they may commit sins and misdeeds.

101- Ruling on praying behind an Imam who is a smoker

Q: Is it permissible to offer Salah (Prayer) behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who is a smoker, clean-shaven or has a short beard, or wears garments longer than the proper limit? What should we do in such cases?

A: According to the correct opinion of scholars, Salah offered behind a disobedient Imam is valid; however, people should choose Imams based on their righteousness, because an Imam is an example for those praying behind him. Thus, if one prays behind a Fasiq (someone flagrantly violating Islamic law), an Imam who is smoker, one who shaves his beard, wears garments longer than the proper limit or commits other sins, their Salah is valid. Conversely, Salah behind a Kafir (disbeliever) is invalid.

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Praying behind a sinful person is valid, but it will not be a perfect Salah. It is an obligation upon those in charge to appoint Imams from among the people of goodness, justice and uprightness. This is obligatory; however, if one prays behind a sinner, the Salah is valid.

102- Ruling on a Ma'mum who forgets to recite Surah Al-Fatihah

Q: If the Salah (Prayer) has begun and while performing it I forget to recite Surah Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in one or two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) behind the Imam, is my Salah valid or not? Is it obligatory to recite Surah Al-Fatihah or not? What should I do in this situation?

A: If the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) forgets to recite Surah Al-Fatihah or does not know that it is an obligation to recite it or joins the Salah while the Imam is performing Ruku` (bowing), the Rak`ah is counted in all these situations and the Salah is valid. The Ma'mum does not have to repeat that Rak`ah, because they are excused for forgetting to recite Surah Al-Fatihah, ignorance of the obligation to recite it or inability to join the Imam in the standing position before Ruku`. This is the opinion of the majority of the scholars based on the Hadith related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih: (from Abu Bakrah Al-Thaqafiy who entered the Masjid (mosque) while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was in Ruku` (bowing). So he bowed before reaching the row (and then joined the row).

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to him, 'May Allah increase your keenness (on good), but do not repeat it again (bowing in that manner).') It is noted that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not command him to repeat that Rak`ah, but only prohibited him to bow down before joining the row. Allah is the Grantor of success!

103- The obligation to follow the Imam in Salah

Q: What is the ruling on some women who do not follow the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) properly during Salah (Prayer), but they bow and prostrate as they like?

A: This is not permissible and their Salah is invalid, because one praying behind an Imam must follow him, and should not precede him; nor play during the Salah. This ruling applies to both men and women. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (The Imam is appointed to be followed, so do not differ from him; when he says Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest), say Allahu Akbar and do not say Allahu Akbar until he says Allahu Akbar. When he bows; bow down...) till the end of the Hadith. Therefore, it is obligatory to follow the Imam and not play during the Salah. We ask Allah's Protection.

104- Ruling on rushing and running to catch the Salah Q: Many Muslims are very careful not to miss any part of the congregational Salah (Prayer). When they come to the Masjid (mosque) and hear that the Imam has begun the Salah they start running and rushing to catch the Salah. What is the ruling on this act or this common behavior?

A: Rushing and running to catch the Salah is Makruh (reprehensible) and should not be done. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (When you come to Salah, approach it (walking) with tranquility. Pray what you are in time for, and complete what you have missed.) The Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet) is to come to Salah walking with humility and not hasten. One should proceed with calmness and walk normally with humility and tranquility until one reaches the line. This is the Sunnah which should be followed in this regard.

Q: Sometimes one enters the Masjid (mosque) while the Imam is performing the last Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), so the person rushes to catch up with this Rak`ah with the Imam, so they may be credited for congregational Salah.

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It is reported in the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him): (Anyone who catches up with one Rak`ah from Salah has caught up with the (congregational) Salah.) **However, some Imams (may Allah forgive them) return to the standing position quickly after Ruku` (bowing) despite their hearing some people coming and trying to catch up with the Rak`ah. Is there any advice to be given to these Imams to take their time, particularly when bowing in the last Rak`ah, to allow the late-coming worshippers to join and get the blessing of performing the Salah in congregation? When is the late-coming Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) considered to have attended this Rak`ah? Is it when joining the Imam before his saying: "Sami`a Allahu liman hamidah (Allah listens to those who praise Him)", or even during his saying: "Sami`a Allahu liman hamidah"? I request Your Eminence to provide us with details on this issue due to its significance. May Allah reward you with the best!**

A: One coming to Salah should have tranquility and solemnity without rushing to it, even if one fears missing the Rak`ah. The Messenger (peace be upon him) stated: (When you come to Salah, approach it (walking) with tranquility. Pray what you are in time for, and complete what you have missed.) On the other hand, it is required from the Imams (may Allah guide them) that when they hear someone coming to the Salah while they are

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still bowing they should not straighten up quickly in order that those joining the Salah can catch that Rak`ah. As long as the latecomer says, "Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest)" and joins the Imam before he straightens up, then one is considered to have attended this Rak`ah, even without having recited Tasbih (i.e. saying: Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim [Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great]) until after the Imam's straightening up. This is based on the general meaning of the statement of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): (Anyone who catches up with one Rak`ah from Salah has caught up with the (congregational) Salah.) In another narration he (peace be upon him) stated: (Anyone who catches up with the Ruku` (bowing) has caught up with the Rak`ah.) (This ruling is also in consonance with the Hadith of Abu Bakrah Al-Thaqafiy when he entered the Masjid while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was in Ruku` (bowing). So he bowed before reaching the line (and then got in the row). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to him, 'May Allah increase your keenness (on good), but do not repeat it again (bowing in that manner).') (Related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih [Authentic Hadith Book]) It is noted that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not command him to repeat the Rak`ah indicating that it was valid and was counted as one complete Rak`ah for him. Moreover, this Hadith denotes that one coming to the Salah should not run or rush to bow down and wait until entering the line, as understood from the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (May Allah increase your keenness (on good), but do not repeat it again (bowing in that

manner).) Allah is the Grantor of success!

105- Explanation of the Hadith:

(Anyone who catches up with one Rak`ah from Salah has caught up with the Salah)

Q: I read a Hadith of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) narrated in the Sahih of Al-Bukhari and Muslim and in the book entitled: Al-Muwatta' compiled by Imam Malik ibn Anas (may Allah be merciful to him). He reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: (Anyone who catches up with one Rak`ah from Salah has caught up with the (congregational) Salah.) **However, I see Muslims who miss some Rak`ahs stand up after the Imam's conclusion of the Salah and make up for what they miss; whereas, the Hadith says: Anyone who catches up with one Rak`ah from Salah has caught up with the Salah (in congregation). Therefore, there is no need to make up for what they have missed of the Salah, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated that they are considered to have attended the whole Salah. Please remove this confusion which I have regarding the meaning of this Hadith?**

A: The meaning of the above-mentioned Hadith is that whoever joins one Rak`ah with the Imam will attain the virtue (reward) of praying in congregation, but one is still required to make up for the missed parts of the Salah. Moreover, Sahih (authentic) Hadiths have been reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) indicating that whoever misses anything from the Salah should make it up after the Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) of the Imam. For example, he (peace be upon him) said: (When you come to Salah, approach it (walking) with tranquility.

Pray what you are in time for, and complete what you have missed.) He (peace be upon him) also said: (Anyone who catches up with one Rak`ah of Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer, let him add one more to it and his Salah will be complete.) Allah is the Grantor of success!

106- Ruling on reciting Du`a'-ul-Istiftah and Al-Fatihah when joining the Imam while he is bowing

Q: If a latecomer joins the Salah (Prayer) while the Imam is about to finish his recitation before Ruku` (bowing), should the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) in this case recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer): "Glory be to You, O Allah, and Yours is the Praise, Blessed is Your Name, Exalted is Your Majesty and there is no god but You," or should one just join the Imam and remain silent?

A: If the Ma'mum joins the congregational Salah while the Imam is bowing, they should immediately bow with the Imam and should not recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah or anything from the Qur'an. They should only pronounce Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") and bow with the Imam. However, when joining the Imam while he is still standing before Ruku` and there is enough time, the Ma'mum should recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah and Surah Al-Fatihah, if time allows. That is the prescribed procedure in this case. The Ma'mum is required to first recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah and then Surah Al-Fatihah, even if it is a Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud).

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When the Imam pauses after Al-Fatihah, the Ma'mum should recite them during that pause, but if the Imam does not pause, they can recite them quietly to themselves and then listen attentively to the recitation of the Imam. When arriving late while the Imam is bowing down, the Ma'mum should pronounce Takbir and bow; they are excused from the obligation of reciting Al-Fatihah in this case.

107- The part of congregational Salah caught by a latecomer is considered the first part of their prayer

Q: A man joined the congregational Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and caught two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) with the Imam and prayed the last Rak`ah alone. Should he recite Surah Al-Fatihah audibly in this last Rak`ah bearing in mind that he caught the Imam's last Rak`ah? Or, should he consider the second Rak`ah he caught with the Imam his second Rak`ah?

A: The Rak`ah which he made up for after the Imam concluded the Salah (Prayer) is considered the last Rak'ah for him, and he, therefore, should not recite Surah Al-Fatihah audibly during this Rak`ah. According to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars, the part of congregational Salah caught by a latecomer is considered the first part of his Salah and the part he makes up for after the Imam's concluding the Salah is considered the last part of it. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (When you come to Salah, approach it walking with calmness. Whatever you catch up with, pray, and whatever you miss, complete it [afterwards].) (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.)

108- Ruling on the Imam prolonging Ruku` to give a chance to latecomers

Q: Is it required from the Imam to prolong Ruku` (bowing) if he hears people running to join the Salah (Prayer)? Is it also required from him to prolong the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer) for the same reason? A: It is best to join the Salah without rushing and for the Imam to slow down in a way that does not cause hardship for the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) who joined him from the beginning. Considering their situation takes priority over considering the situation of latecomers. Therefore, the Imam should consider the situation of those who started the Salah with him; however, it is still better for the Imam to prolong an act a bit so as to enable latecomers to bow, prostrate or recite Tashahhud along with him.

109- The action prescribed for a latecomer who joins Salah while the Imam is still bowing

Q: Some people rush in order to join Salah (Prayer) before the Imam stands upright after Ruku` (bowing). Then some of them pronounce Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") twice: one for Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer) and the second one for Takbirat-ul-Ruku` (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" when bending for Ruku`) while others say Takbir only once.

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What is the ruling regarding this issue?

A: It is prescribed for a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) who comes to Salah while the Imam is still in the Ruku` position not to hurry. Rather, the latecomer should walk with tranquility and solemnity then join the rows following the Imam in whatever position he is. The Messenger (peace be upon him) commanded this. They should pronounce Takbirat-ul-Ihram while standing and then Takbirat-ul-Ruku` when bending down for Ruku`; however, if they only pronounce Takbirat-ul-Ihram, then Allah Willing, this is sufficient in order not to miss the Rak`ah (unit of Prayer). Allah is the Grantor of success!

110- The ruling when the Imam bends for Ruku` before a latecomer completes Al-Fatihah

Q: If a latecomer joins the Imam in Salah (Prayer) from the third Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), or any other Rak`ah, and the Imam bows before they can complete Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), should that person lag behind the Imam to complete its recitation? Or should one bow with the Imam and then make up for this Rak`ah? Or does this case take the same ruling of a latecomer who joins the Imam while he is performing Ruku` (bowing); and therefore, does not have to recite it or make up for the Rak`ah?

A: It is required from such a person to exert every possible effort to complete the recitation of Al-Fatihah before the Imam performs Ruku` and not neglect it.

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One should do one's best to recite it before the Imam starts to bow. However, if the Imam does so before they complete the recitation of one or two Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) there is nothing with completing them, and then joining the Imam in Ruku`. But, if one fears missing the Ruku` with the Imam, one should stop reciting, say Takbir, and join the Imam in Ruku` as one is excused in this situation.

111- Ruling on reciting Al-Fatihah behind the Imam in Jahri Salah

Q: A questioner from Najran in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia asks: I cannot recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) behind the Imam in Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud), because the Imam starts the recitation of the other Surah immediately after Al-Fatihah and I cannot read or supplicate while another person is reciting the Qur'an, as it confuses me? I request Your Eminence to guide me, may Allah reward you with the best!

A: It is obligatory to recite Al-Fatihah when praying behind an Imam leading either Jahri or Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation), even if he does not pause and starts reciting the other Surah immediately after the recitation of Al-Fatihah in Jahri Salah.

This is based on the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ❨There is no Salah for the one who does not recite Umm-ul-Qur'an (the Mother of the Qur'an i.e. Al-Fatihah).❩ (Agreed upon its authenticity) Also, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet): ❨'Perhaps you recite behind your Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)?' They said, 'Yes.' He (peace be upon him) said, 'Do not do that except for Fatihat-ul-Kitab (the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah); for there is no Salah for the one who does not recite it (in it).'❩

May Allah guide us all to obtain beneficial knowledge and act according to it.

112- Ruling on one who joins Salah while the Imam is in the Ruku` position

Q: What is the ruling on one who joins Salah (Prayer) while the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is in Ruku` (bowing) position? Is Salah counted for him or not, since the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: "The Salah is not regarded as complete without the recitation of Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an)"? Please, provide us with a beneficial answer, may Allah benefit you?

A: According to the preponderant opinion, if one joins the Imam in Ruku`, the Rak'ah (unit of Prayer) is counted for him. It is reported that ❨ Abu Bakrah Al-Thaqafy (may Allah be pleased with him) came while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was bowing. He bowed before entering the row and then joined in the ranks while bowing. He

(peace be upon him) said to him: "May Allah increase your love for good, but do not repeat it again (i.e. bowing in that way)."❩ It should be noted that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not command him to repeat that Rak`ah and this was an indication that he was excused for that act. This Hadith specifies the meaning of the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in which he stated: ❨The Salah of whoever does not recite Al-Fatihah is invalid.❩ This is applicable to the Imam and the one praying individually. Therefore, if the Imam or one praying individually does not recite Al-Fatihah, then they should repeat the entire Salah if a long time has passed after finishing the Salah. On the other hand, if only a brief time has passed after finishing the Salah, then one should repeat the Rak`ah in which they did not recite Al-Fatihah only and perform Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) if the negligence of reciting Al-Fatihah was due to forgetfulness. However, if it is done intentionally, then one is to repeat the entire Salah, since it is invalid.

113- What should one praying individually do if a congregational Salah begins?

Q: A man was performing the obligatory Salah (Prayer) individually when a group entered the Masjid (mosque) and started a congregation for the same Salah. Should he have interrupted his Salah to join them, or change his intention from obligatory to Nafilah (supererogatory Salah) to join the congregation?

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A: The best course of action in this situation is to turn the Salah into Nafilah and then pray with the congregation in order to obtain the virtue of performing Salah in congregation. However, there is nothing wrong if one interrupts the Salah and joins the congregation, because it is stopped for a Shar`y (Islamic legal) benefit that has to do with the same Salah. Allah is the Grantor of guidance and success!

Q: I joined the Imam in the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer) and when he finished the Salah I stood up to make up for what I had missed of the Salah. At that time a group of people entered the Masjid (mosque) and began a congregational Salah. Is it allowed for me to discontinue my Salah and join them so as to obtain the reward of the congregational Salah? Or should I change my Salah to Nafilah (supererogatory Salah) and pray shortly to join the congregation?

A: It is permissible to discontinue your Salah in order to pray with the congregation; or you can also change it to a Nafilah and perform it as two short complete Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), then join the congregational Salah. It should be noted that joining the congregation in this situation is better than performing your Salah individually. May Allah guide us all to the truth and to the right path!

114- Ruling on reciting Al-Fatihah behind the Imam in Sirri Salah

Q: I offered the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer [which is Sirri Salah: Prayer with subvocal recitation] behind an Imam, but I forgot to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in the first Rak`ah (unit of Prayer). Does the Imam's recitation of Al-Fatihah suffice for me regarding this pillar?

A: Yes, if the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) forgets to recite Al-Fatihah or is ignorant of the obligation to recite it, the Imam will bear responsibility for it on their behalf, that is, his recitation suffices for them as stated in the Hadith of Abu Bakrah Al-Thaqafiy (who entered the Masjid (mosque) while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was in Ruku` (bowing). So he bowed before reaching the row (and then joined the row). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to him, 'May Allah increase your keenness (on good), but do not repeat it again (bowing in that manner).') It is noteworthy to mention that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not command him to repeat that Rak`ah, even though he did not attend the part of standing and reciting the Qur'an.

115- Ruling on joining one praying individually

Q: If a man begins offering an obligatory Salah (Prayer) individually in the Masjid (mosque), or in any other place, and one or more persons come and stand in row with him to offer the Salah; is this acceptable?

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A: According to the soundest scholarly opinion it is permissible to do that, but if just one person joins him he should stand to his right side; and if more than one person, they should line up behind him. He is then considered their Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and there is nothing wrong in doing this according to the most correct opinion of the scholars. (It is reported that the Messenger (peace be upon him) was praying individually during the night when Ibn Abbas came and stood to his left side. He (peace be upon him) made him stand to his right and completed the Salah with him.) It should be noted that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not intend to be an Imam when he started this Salah. It is also authentically reported (that the Prophet (peace be upon him) would pray individually in some of his journeys; two of the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) once came and stood to his right and left. So he moved forward to the position of Imam and they lined up behind him and he completed his Salah with them.) If this is allowed in the voluntary Salah it is also allowed in the obligatory Salah, because they have the same rulings, with the exception of what has been specified to either type of the Salah with evidence. If it was allowed in the voluntary Salah only, the Prophet (peace be upon him) would have informed them that it was only allowed in the voluntary Salah and not in the obligatory Salah. Since he (peace be upon him) did not specify this ruling to the voluntary Salah, it is an indication that the ruling is the same for both obligatory and voluntary Salahs. Allah is the Grantor of success!

116- Ruling on reciting Al-Fatihah in Jahri Salah

Q: Is it permissible for the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) to omit the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud)?

A: According to the soundest scholarly opinion, it is obligatory when praying behind an Imam to recite Al-Fatihah inaudibly in both Jahri Salah and Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation). Nevertheless, there is no blame if one does not recite it out of ignorance of its obligation, out of forgetfulness, or due to joining the Salah while the Imam is bowing or about to bow down. The Ma'mum is excused from the obligation of reciting it in this case. This is based on the authentically reported Hadith in which Abu Bakrah (may Allah be pleased with him) joined the Salah while the Messenger (peace be upon him) was in Ruku` (bowing) position, so Abu Bakrah bowed before joining the row and then entered the row. Upon finishing Salah, the Messenger (peace be upon him) said to him: (May Allah increase your keenness (on good), but do not repeat it again (bowing in that manner).) The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not command him to repeat that Rak`ah (unit of Prayer). The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ('Perhaps you recite behind your Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)?' They (the Companions) said, 'Yes.' He (peace be upon him) said, 'Do not do that except for Fatihat-ul-Kitab (the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah); for there is no Salah for the one who does not recite it (in it).') He (peace be upon him) also said: (There is no Salah for the one who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab.)

Therefore, it is obligatory for the Ma'mum to recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab in both Jahri and Sirri Salah. However, if one does not recite it out of ignorance of its obligation, thinking that the Imam's recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah will suffice, as held by a group of scholars; or out of forgetfulness; or joined the Salah while the Imam is in the Ruku` position, the obligation of reciting it is waived.

117- Ruling on joining `Isha' congregational Prayer with the intention of offering Maghrib Prayer

From `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz to my respected brother R. H. Sh. may Allah safeguard him.

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

With reference to your question registered in the Departments of Scholarly Research and Ifta' as no. 1693, dated: 2/5/1407 A.H., which states: "Once the Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers were congregationally combined because of rain. With the intention of performing Maghrib Prayer, I joined the congregation while the Imam was in the second Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of the `Isha' Prayer. After the Imam performed the First Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer), he got up and offered the last two Rak`ahs of the `Isha' prayer which made me know that he was offering the `Isha' Prayer when I had not attended its first Rak`ah in which the Qur'an is recited audibly exactly like the Maghrib Prayer. My question is: is the part of Salah (Prayer) I caught with the Imam sufficient as the Maghrib Prayer?

Should I then just offer the `Isha' Prayer? What is the ruling if I join the `Isha' Prayer from the beginning having not offered the Maghrib Prayer? Having known that it was the `Isha' Prayer only when the Imam got up to perform the fourth Rak`ah, should I remain sitting when the Imam gets up to perform the fourth Rak`ah (i.e. not perform it with him) so that it might be considered the three-Rak`ah Maghrib Prayer I have not performed until then? When is it permissible to combine two Prayers? Please answer us, may Allah reward you with the best!

A: My answer your is that, according to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars, the three Rak`ahs which you performed with the Imam are sufficient as the Maghrib Prayer which you missed since your intention was to perform the Maghrib Prayer. Likewise, one who offers the Maghrib Prayer being led by an Imam offering the `Isha' Prayer having joined the Salah from the beginning should sit after the third Rak`ah and not follow the Imam offering the fourth Rak`ah. In such a case, it is better to remain sitting and waiting until the Imam says Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and then say Taslim following the Imam. May Allah guide us all to what pleases Him, for indeed He is All-Hearing and Responsive.

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118- Ruling on joining one completing his Salah after the Imam has concluded the Salah

Q: A man was completing his Salah (Prayer) at the Masjid (mosque) after the Imam finished the Salah and then another man came and joined him in the Salah. What is the ruling regarding this act?

A: There is nothing wrong in doing this; however, it is best for each one of them to complete the missed parts of the Salah individually. It is reported that when the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Al-Mughirah missed one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) from the Salah, each one of them completed his Salah individually as reported in the Sahih of Muslim: (from Al-Mughirah ibn Shu`bah during the Battle of Tabuk; he said: The Prophet (peace be upon him) went to answer the call of nature and it was time for the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. When he returned he performed Wudu' (ablution) and was wearing Khuffs (leather socks). When I tried to take them off so that he would wash his feet, he said: 'O Mughirah, leave them on; I put them on while ritually pure.' Then he (peace be upon him) wiped over the Khuffs. Al-Mughirah continued in his narration saying: Then we went to the location of the army and found that they had already started the Salah and put forward `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf to lead them in the Salah. By the time the Prophet (peace be upon him) arrived, they had already finished one Rak`ah with `Abdul-Rahman. When `Abdul-Rahman saw the Prophet (peace be upon him) he wanted to step back, so that the Prophet (peace be upon him) would lead the Salah, but he (peace be upon him) gestured to him to continue in leading the Salah.

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) and Al-Mughirah joined the row with the people and they had already missed one Rak`ah. When `Abdul-Rahman finished his Salah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Al-Mughirah stood up and made up for the missed Rak`ah, each one on his own.) This is an indication that if the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is later than usual, it is allowed for the people to choose someone to lead them in Salah and they do not have to wait for him as it is not allowed for him to object to their decision. It is also deduced from this incident that if one misses a part of the Salah, one should make it up after the Imam offers Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer).

119- Ruling on a traveler praying behind a resident Imam

Q: A traveler joins a resident Imam in a four-Rak`ah Salah (Prayer consisting of four units) while the Imam is in the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer). Should the traveler shorten his Salah to two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) only or should he complete his Salah as four Rak`ahs?

A: The traveler should complete his Salah as four Rak`ahs, even though he joins the Imam towards the end of the Salah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Pray what you are in time for, and complete what you have missed." Therefore, if he prays one Rak`ah with the Imam, or less or more of a four-Rak`ah Salah, he should complete the Salah as four Rak`ahs.

120- The part a latecomer prays along with the Imam is considered the beginning of his Salah while the part he makes up for is the last

Q: A person joined the Imam in the last two Rak`ahs (units) of the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer. He joined the Salah after the Imam had already finished the first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer) and stood up for the last two Rak`ahs. How should he complete his Salah, may Allah reward you with the best?

A: When the Imam offers Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), the latecomer should stand to complete his Salah. The two Rak`ahs which he performs after the Imam finishes the Salah are considered as his last two Rak`ahs, whereas his first two Rak`ahs are the ones which he performed with the Imam. Therefore, the two Rak`ahs which a latecomer performs with the Imam are his first two Rak`ahs, and thus, it is allowed for him to recite more Qur'an along with Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), if the Imam prolongs his standing in these last two Rak`ahs. This is because they constitute the first two Rak`ahs for the latecomer. The established rule in this regard is that what a latecomer attends with the Imam is considered the beginning of his Salah, and what he makes up for is the last part of his Salah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: (Pray what you are in time for, and complete what you have missed.) Thus, completing the Salah refers to making up for the two Rak`ahs for one who missed the first two Rak`ahs of Salah with the Imam. Therefore, the two Rak`ahs which one performs on one's own will be considered as the last two Rak`ahs of his Salah.

121- Ruling on following the Imam if he stands for a fifth Rak`ah

Q: While performing a four-Rak`ah Salah (Prayer consisting of four units), the Imam stood for a fifth Rak`ah due to forgetfulness. Some of those praying behind him followed him in the fifth Rak`ah, while others remained seated and waited until he finished the fifth Rak`ah and offered Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). Which group was right?

A: Both are right; the Salah of those who stood up with the Imam unknowingly is valid, and the Salah of those who were sure that it was an extra Rak`ah and so waited until the Imam offered Taslim is also valid. This is what is obligatory for them to do in this situation. If the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) knows for sure that it is an extra Rak`ah, he should not stand up with the Imam, but should remain seated until the Imam finishes it and concludes his Salah. On the other hand, one who is unaware of this should mind to stand and follow the Imam, because the basic rule is to follow the Imam. In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills), the Salah of both groups is valid.

122- Ruling on a child leading Salah

Respected Shaykh `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz,

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!) A blessed year to you!

I ask Your Eminence: Is it allowed for the child to act as the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)?

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May Allah reward you with the best for enlightening the Muslim Community regarding their religion.

Wa `alaykum as-salam warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you too!) To proceed:

There is nothing wrong in appointing a child as the Imam as long as he is, at least, seven years old and can perform the Salah properly, based on the Hadith authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) in support of this ruling. However, it is preferable that people choose the best reciter of the Qur'an from among them to lead the Salah. If they are equally good in reciting the Qur'an, they should choose the one who is more knowledgeable of the Sunnah. If they are equal in this regard, they should choose the one who migrated first. If they are equal in this regard, they should choose the oldest among them as has been authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh!

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123- Ruling on a traveler praying behind one performing a supererogatory Salah

Q: A questioner from Shaqra' asks: A traveler entered the Masjid (mosque) to perform the `Isha' (Night) Prayer and found the Imam offering Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan), and thus, he joined the Salah (Prayer) with him with the intention of performing the `Isha' Prayer shortened to two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer). Was this act right Your Eminence?

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A: There is nothing wrong in doing that, because there are authentic Hadiths from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that indicate the permissibility of performing obligatory Salah led by one performing a supererogatory Salah. It should also be noted that the Salah of a traveler is two Rak`ahs and the Tarawih Prayer is two Rak`ahs; therefore, there is no difference in the number of the Rak`ahs of both Salahs.

On the other hand, if a traveler joins a resident Imam offering Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer or `Isha' (Night) Prayer, then the traveler should perform that Salah as four complete Rak`ahs; even though he attends only part of that Salah with the Imam. Authentic reports from the Prophet (peace be upon him) proves this ruling. Allah is the Grantor of success!

124- Ruling on echoing the voice of the Imam in Al-Masjid Al-Haram

Q: In Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) and Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy (the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah) during the Salah, the Mu'adhin (caller to Prayer) repeats Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") and Tasmi` (saying: "Sami`a Allahu liman hamidah [Allah listens to those who praise Him]")," when standing after Ruku`) after the Imam loudly and he lengthens his voice in a way that confuses the worshippers. I think the voice of the Imam should be sufficient for those led in the Salah, particularly when there are loud speakers reaching every spot in these two Holy Places of worship. I request Your Eminence to give us a beneficial answer regarding this issue?

A: There is nothing wrong in echoing the voice of the Imam because it attracts the people's attention to the actions and movements of the Imam. Al-Masjid Al-Haram is very big and some people might be unaware and not pay attention to the voice of the Imam.

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Therefore, there is no blame in drawing the people's attention in such big places of worship. It is reported that Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) was praying led by the Prophet (peace be upon him) during his sickness and he used to echo the voice of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to the rest of the congregation as his voice was weakened by illness. Thus, conveying the Imam's voice is needed to attract the attention of the people in remote areas of the Sacred House to the actions and movements of the Imam; thus, they will be able to follow him.

Q: A questioner from Chicago in America asks: I went for `Umrah (lesser pilgrimage) a while ago and I noticed that in Al-Haram Al-Sharif (the Sacred Sanctuary of Makkah) and during the Salah there was a brother, I think he was the Mu'adhin (caller to Prayer), echoing Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") after the Imam, and I was surprised by this act. After the Salah was finished I asked a brother, I think he was from Makkah Makkah Al-Mukarramah (Makkah, the Honored), about this and he told me that this is called conveying; namely, conveying Takbir to the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) who cannot hear the voice of the Imam clearly. I said to him: But those led in the Salah can hear the voice of the Imam clearly through the loud speakers placed in every spot of Al-Haram. Then he said: It is just an old custom which was practiced before the invention of the loud speaker and remained until today. I was not convinced by his answer.

Respected Shaykh: What is the Islamic ruling on this echoing of the Imam's voice which confuses many of those praying in Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah); particularly with the availability of loud speakers which convey the voice of the Imam to every spot and corner and all those led in the Salah hear it clearly?

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Moreover, there are very sensitive sound devices fastened easily to the Imam's clothes which accompany him during his bowing, prostration, and in all his actions and movements. Please clarify this issue for us; may Allah prolong your life in His obedience.

A: I do not know of anything wrong with conveying the voice of the Imam, because there might be some people in the remote corners of Al-Haram who cannot hear it. It is authentically reported that when the Prophet (peace be upon him) led the people in Salah during his final illness, Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) conveyed his voice to the other worshippers. Allah is the Grantor of success!

125- Ruling on a worshipper who bows while the Imam is performing Sujud-ul-Tilawah

Q: A questioner from Tamir in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia asks: The Imam made Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") and performed Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation), but some of the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer), especially women, bowed thinking that he made Takbir for Ruku` (bowing) and they did not know that he was performing Sujud-ul-Tilawah until he rose from the prostration. What should they do in this situation? And what should they do if it was the opposite: namely, the Imam made Takbir for Ruku`, whereas some of those led in the Salah performed Sujud-ul-Tilawah, thinking that the Imam was performing Sujud-ul-Tilawah?

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A: Those who bowed while the Imam was performing Sujud-ul-Tilawah and did not know that the Imam was prostrating until he rose from the prostration should follow the Imam in the rest of the Salah and there is no blame on them, because they were unaware of the Imam's position. Similarly, those who prostrated while the Imam was bowing, thinking that he was prostrating should rise up from prostration. When they have stood up completely they should bow, then straighten up; and then follow the Imam in the rest of the Salah, and there is no blame on them because they did not intend to be at variance with the Imam; rather, they were unaware of his position. Allah is the Grantor of success!

126- The Islamically prescribed way for Du`a' after obligatory Salah

Q: Is it allowed for the Imam, after concluding the obligatory Salah (Prayer), to supplicate for the acceptance of Salah, Sawm (Fasting), and the amendment of affairs and to invoke Allah to bestow His Mercy upon the living and the dead? Should those led in the Salah say "Amen" after him? If this is not allowed, what is the evidence for its prohibition, may Allah reward you?

A: It is not permissible for the Imam to supplicate aloud after the conclusion of one of the Five Obligatory Daily Salahs, whether he raises his hands or not, and it is not allowed for those led in the Salah to say "Amen" to his Du`a' (supplication) in this situation. Neither the Messenger (peace be upon him) nor his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) did that. Moreover, he (peace be upon him) said: (Anyone who does an action which is not in accordance with this matter of ours (Islam) will have it

rejected.) He (peace be upon him) also said: (Anyone who introduces anything into this matter of ours (Islam) that is not part of it will have it rejected.) The Prophet (peace be upon him) never raised his hands supplicating and people saying "Amen" after the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer or `Isha' (Night) Prayer. Also, it was not reported that he (peace be upon him) supplicated without raising his hands while the congregation responded "Amen." However, there is nothing wrong if one supplicates for oneself and other Muslims privately between him and his Lord (Allah) after finishing the established Adhkar (invocations and Remembrances said at certain times on a regular basis) after the obligatory Salah. As for collective Du`a' between the Imam and the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer), or the Du`a' accompanied by raising the hands, it is not legislated and was not done by our Prophet (peace be upon him), nor by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. According to our knowledge, none of the Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them and please them) ever did it.

127- Ruling on prohibiting the poor from begging in the Masjid

Q: I am an Imam of a Masjid (mosque) and there are many people who beg others after the Salah (Prayer). Is it allowed for me to stop these beggars from talking to the people and command them to stand at the entrance of the Masjid or not?

A: I do not know of any Islamic evidence requiring the prohibition of the poor from begging in the Masjid, unless the person is known to be a liar who claims poverty, then he should be stopped from begging. May Allah grant success to all!

128- Ruling on stepping forward to lead the Salah in the presence of the regular Imam

Q: Is it permissible for someone to put himself forward to lead the people in the obligatory Salah (Prayer) in the presence of the regular Imam, bearing in mind that this person is more knowledgeable than the regular Imam?

A: It is not permissible for anyone to put himself forward to lead the people in Salah in the presence of the regular Imam, because the regular Imam is the one authorized to lead Salah and has the right to this position. It is not permissible for a person to put himself forward to lead the people in Salah in his presence. Similarly, it is not allowed for people to put someone forward to lead them in Salah in the presence of the regular Imam. It is the regular Imam who has the right to lead the people in Salah, unless he

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puts a person forward to lead the Salah on his behalf and asks him to lead the people in Salah; in which case, there is no harm. However, it is best for that person to let the regular Imam lead the Salah if he thinks that the Imam puts him forward out of humility, since the Imam may do this out of shyness, not seriously. If the Imam is qualified to lead the Salah, then well and good; and therefore, it is better for the one offered to lead the Salah to let the Imam lead it and should not accept that offer. On the other hand, if there is goodness in accepting the offer to lead the Salah such as reminding people with Allah, teaching them religion and setting a good example, then there is no harm in accepting the offer and leading the Salah.

Chapter on the way to perform Salah by people having legal excuses

129- Explaining the manner in which the sick should purify themselves and perform their Salahs

Q: Is it permissible for a bedridden patient to offer Salah (Prayer) while sitting down ?

A: It is permissible for a sick person to perform Salah while sitting, if it is too difficult to perform it while standing. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith reported by Imran ibn Husayn in response to his complaint: ﴾Pray while standing; and if you cannot, then while sitting; and if you cannot, then while lying on your side; and if you cannot, then while lying on your back.﴿ This is how Allah makes things easy and simple for His servants.

Thus, if a sick man or woman cannot pray while standing, they can pray while sitting. If they cannot pray while sitting due to the severity of illness, they can pray while lying on their side and it is better to be on the right side.

If lying on the side is still difficult for them, they can pray while lying on their back, stretching the legs towards the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer) and facing the same direction. Also, bedridden patients who cannot pray while standing due to paralysis can pray while sitting and face the Qiblah. They should prostrate on the ground and lean forward to simulate Ruku` (bowing), but if the patient cannot prostrate on the ground, they can simulate Sujud (prostration), making it lower than their Ruku`. Allah (Exalted be He) states: ﴾Allâh burdens not a person beyond his scope.﴿ He (Glorified be He) also states: ﴾So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴿ End of explanation. Allah is the Grantor of success!

130- Ruling on an ill person combining two Salahs

Respected father and Shaykh `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz, may Allah grant you success!

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!) To proceed:

We have a neighbor who is bedridden and cannot go to answer the call of nature except with the help of others. It is also difficult for him to clean himself after answering the call of nature, clean his body and his clothes properly in the way prescribed by Shari`ah (Islamic law) and he cannot perform Wudu' (ablution) except with the help of others which even still is difficult for him.

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The question is: Is it allowed for him to perform Tayammum (dry ablution with clean earth)? If he cannot perfectly purify himself, is it permissible for him to pray as his ability allows him? Is it allowed for him to combine the Salahs (Prayers), or to offer one Salah near the end of its time and the following one at the beginning of its time?

We have told him to perform Salah according to his ability and that he should not neglect Salah; however, he is now reluctant to perform Salah and does not want to perform it out of fear that it will not be accepted from him. Therefore, he is in need of a letter from your Eminence assuring him that his Salah in this way is acceptable.

We request Your Eminence to explain the proper way which he should follow in purifying himself and praying in order to give it to him so that he will perform the Salahs properly. May Allah reward you with the best!

Wa `alaykum as-salam warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you too!) To proceed:

A: It is an obligation upon this patient to perform the Five Obligatory Daily Salahs at their prescribed times; however, there is no objection to combining the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer with the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer at the time of either of them, and the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and the `Isha' (Night) Prayer at the time of either of them. Similarly, there is no objection to Istijmar (cleansing the private parts with a hard material after urination or defecation) using pure and clean stones, adobe or napkins to clean himself from urine or stool three times or more until the area is cleansed; but it should not be less than three times. Furthermore, if he is unable to perform Wudu' with water as there is no

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one to help him perform it, he may perform Tayammum and offer Salah. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴿ He (Glorified and Exalted be He) also states: ﴾Allâh burdens not a person beyond his scope.﴿ The Prophet (peace be

upon him) said to Imran ibn Husayn (may Allah be pleased with them both): ﴾Pray while standing; and if you cannot, then while sitting; and if you cannot, then while lying on your side; and if you cannot, then while lying on your back﴿ May Allah guide all of us to the what pleases Him. Peace be upon you!

The Grand Mufty of the Kingdom

`Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz

A sister says: If a woman has a broken leg, is it permissible for her to gather two prayers together?

If it is difficult for her to perform ablution for each prayer, she may combine the two prayers together, for the permission given for the patient; otherwise, she should perform each prayer at its fixed time.

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Q : I have a fourteen year old sister, who suffer hemiplegia and it is difficult for her to perform ablution by any means. Because she is handicapped in one hand and is unable to perform ablution on the other, is it allowed for her to combine the Zhuhr prayer with the 'Asr prayer, as it is difficult for her to perform the prayers at their fixed times? Please, advise and explain what she should do with regard to ablution and prayer!

Allah (Glorified be He) explains the rulings regarding the paralyzed and diseased people; Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴿So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴾ Thus, there is no harm on her to combine the two prayers at the time of either of them as follows: She can delay a prayer till the end of its time and pray the following one at the beginning of its time, because there is a valid excuse to do that. As for ablution, she must perform it and if she cannot perform it on her own, then someone like her mother or her sister may help her wash the parts she cannot wash on her own. It is not permissible to omit ablution, but she can get help from her mother, sister or others to perform it.

Q: If one has the flu which physicians consider infectious but the person is still permitted to go out, can they

perform Salah (Prayer) at home so as not to infect others with this disease or to harm them as in the case of one who eats garlic or onion; as the Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited him to come to the Masjid (mosque), keeping in mind that the flu strikes one involuntarily, and it is not food which one has the choice to eat it or leave it?

A: It is an obligation upon every man who can perform Salah in congregation to attend the congregational Salah because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Anyone who hears the Nida' (i.e. Adhan; call to Prayer) and he does not come to it (the Masjid), then there is no prayer (counted) for him except if he has a valid excuse. Ibn 'Abbas was asked: What is a valid excuse? He answered: Fear or disease.﴿ Therefore, if it is difficult for the person to go out for Salah due to disease, then he is excused. As for the claim of the infection, it is not a valid excuse that keeps the person away from the congregational Salah because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾There should be neither `Adwa (contagion, transmission of infectious disease without the permission of Allah), Tiyarah (superstitious belief in bird omens), Hamah (pre-Islamic superstitious belief described variously as: a worm which infests the grave of a murder victim until he is avenged; an owl; or the bones of a dead person turned into a bird that could fly), nor Safar (the month of Safar was believed to bring bad luck during Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance).﴿

But the person who eats garlic, onion, or leek should not attend the congregational Salah because the Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited them from going to the Masjid, and commanded that such a person be asked to leave the Masjid in order to protect worshippers from his harm. May Allah grant us success!

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131- Distance in which shortening Salah is allowed

Q: If one travels to a place far away from his residence by a distance of one hundred kilometers, is it permissible for them to combine and shorten Salah (Prayer)?

A: If one travels for a distance of a hundred kilometers, or what equals that distance, from his residence, then he should follow the Islamic rulings of traveling including shortening Salah, breaking Sawm (fast), combining two Salah and wiping over the socks for a period of three days because this distance is considered a traveling distance. The same rulings apply to one traveling for a distance of eighty kilometers or its equal, since this is considered a distance at which Salah is to be shortened according to the Jumhur (dominant majority of scholars).

Q: We are a group of people who go out on picnic and to bring truffles. The picnic area is not far away from our residence; it is eighty kilometers or sometimes just ten kilometers, and we return home at the end of the day. Is it permissible for us to combine and shorten Salah (Prayer), or to shorten Salah without combining them, or is it not allowed to do either; and therefore obligated to perform every Salah at its fixed time? Please provide us with a beneficial answer, may Allah reward you with the best!

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A: If a Muslim travels for a distance of about eighty kilometers or more for a picnic, hunting or another valid purpose, then it is permissible to shorten Salah and perform the four-Rak`ah Salah (Prayer consisting of four units) as two Rak`ahs only. It is also allowed to combine the Zhuhr (Noon) and the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers together and the Maghrib (Sunset) and the `Isha' (Night) Prayers together when the first of the two combined Salah comes in or at the time of the second, whichever is convenient. However, if one rests in a place during the journey, then it is better not to combine Salah and offer each at its fixed time, while shortening it. It is reported that during all his journeys, the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform the Zhuhr Prayer as two Rak`ahs, the `Asr Prayer as two Rak`ahs and the `Isha' Prayer as two Rak'ahs; and used to combine each two Salah during the actual journey, but whenever he (peace be upon him) rested somewhere, then in most cases he did not combine Salah; rather he used to perform each at its fixed time. An example of this is what he did during the Farewell Pilgrimage when he rested at Al-Abtah and at Mina where he offered each Salah at its fixed time without combining them. That is the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him) towards the end of his life, since it is reported that he combined between the two Salahs at the battle of Tabuk, which took place in the ninth year of Hijrah. May Allah grant us success!

Q: I have a farm far away from the city of Al-Ta'if, about eighty-five kilometers distance. Is it permissible for me to combine and shorten the Salah (Prayer), keeping in mind that I go to the farm every day?

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A: In this case you are considered a traveler and there is no blame in combining and shortening Salah. The distance of about eighty kilometers or its equal is considered a traveling distance, and thus, shortening the Salah is permissible. This distance was traveled by a mount for one day and a night in the past.

Q: Is it permissible for me to combine or shorten the Salah if I leave my residence for three days?

A: If you travel eighty kilometers or more away from your residence, then you are considered a traveler. It is permissible for you to shorten and combine Salah if you are away for two, three or four days. If you intend to stay at your destination for more than four days, then you should perform your Salah in its complete form. On the other hand, if the period of stay is four days or less and the distance is eighty kilometers or more, then it is better to shorten the Salah.

Q: I go shopping with some members of my family to a city about fifty kilometers away and we return by sunset. Sometimes we are come back late due to heavy congestion. Therefore, in view of the limited time of Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer we sometimes reach our city by the time of `Isha' (Night) Prayer and thus miss the Maghrib Prayer. Is it permissible for us, due to the long distance and the hardship women suffer, to delay the Maghrib Prayer until we reach our city?

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A: In such a case, there is nothing wrong in delaying the Maghrib Prayer until you reach your city so as to avert hardships; however, it is better to perform it while on your way back if possible.

132- The period during which travelers may shorten Salah

Q: I traveled to London and I did not intend to stay there for a definite period of time in the beginning. Therefore, I started shortening and combining the Salahs (Prayers), and when I decided to stay for a certain period of time I began completing my Salah at their fixed times. What is the ruling on this situation?

A: What you did is in accordance with the opinion of the majority of scholars. Moreover, it is judged by Ibn Al-Mundhir as the unanimous opinion of the scholars. Furthermore, the sound and authentic Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) proves that it is permissible for a traveler to shorten and combine Salah during a journey when there is a valid reason to do so, as long as one does not intend to stay at the destination for a predetermined period of time. However, if the traveler intends to stay for a period more than four days, then, according to the opinion of the majority of scholars, one is obligated to perform complete Salah. Nevertheless, some scholars held that one is permitted to shorten Salah as long as one does not intend to live in that place but merely stays there due to incidental reasons and whenever such reasons on longer exist one departs. It is to be noted that this last opinion is a strong one supported by many Hadiths. In any case, you did the right thing, because by performing complete Salah when you intended to stay in that destination for a period more than four days you avoided any difference of opinion and followed the most precautionary ruling.

133 - Ruling on shortening Salah and not observing Sawm during travel

Your Eminence Shaykh `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz, May Allah protect you and guide you to that which pleases Him.

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

We would like to ask your Eminence about an issue on which you previously gave a Fatwa in response to our fatwa request. However, some people objected to it saying that you gave a different Fatwa on the same issue. So, we felt that we have to ask you again to be assured. We sometimes settle in a valley near Al-Qasim and sometimes move, as most Bedouins do, from one place to another. We have some palm trees at the boundaries of Hijaz near Al-Far` valley where we reside for some time waiting for the time of harvest. The period which we spend there ranges from one month to to 45 days, after which we return to our cattle and families in the desert. During that summer and harvest period, we do not take our families with us. Your Eminence gave us a verbal Fatwa that there is nothing wrong with shortening Salah and not observing Sawm (Fast) during that period, a Fatwa which we acted upon for three years. Please bear in mind that you gave the Fatwa only after asking many questions about the case and investigating how we stay and travel. However, some people confused us when they came with a fatwa to the contrary.

Because this matter is of paramount importance as it is related to the establishment of two pillars of Islam, could you give us a Fatwa on this issue? May Allah protect you!

Wa `alaykum as-salam warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you too!)

I examined the letter submitted by my Muslim brother written by certain Shaykh concerning the ruling on shortening Salah and not observing Sawm as for those who travel a long distance, during which travel-pertaining rulings apply, to their palm trees at the boundaries of Hijaz where they stay for one month to 45 days waiting for harvest and selling it. Some people told them about a Fatwa to the contrary of mine and thus they want to make sure about the issue in question.

The answer is: In the past, I had the view that defining a certain period of travel after the passage of which a traveler is considered resident is substantiated by no proof from the Qur'an or the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him). In the light of this belief, I used to give the Fatwa that it is permissible for a traveler to shorten Salah and not to observe Sawm if they stay for a while to fulfill some needs even if they intend to stay for more than four days. However, I do not remember that I gave you a Fatwa on this issue before and you may be truthful in claiming so. Anyway, I would like to tell you that I now view it is more precautionary for a traveler, in case they intend to stay more than four days,

to perform Salah in full and to observe Sawm to block the way before those ill-minded people who shorten Salah and do not observe Sawm on the pretext that they are on a journey while they rest for so long during it. It is more precautionary, according to my view, not to do so in order to block the means leading to this and to avoid contradicting the opinion of the majority of scholars who view that a traveler intends to stay for a period exceeding four days should not shorten Salah and should observe Sawm in Ramadan. In fact, remaining on the safe side when religious texts give an indecisive indication is required by Shari`ah (Islamic law). In this regard, the Prophet's (peace be upon him) said: ❪Leave what causes you doubt and turn to what does not cause you doubt.❫ He (peace be upon him) also said: ❪So he who guards himself against doubtful things keeps his religion and honor blameless.❫ I ask Allah (Exalted be He) to guide all people to understand His religion and stick firmly to it, for He is All-Hearing and Near. As-salamu `Alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you).

General Chairman of the Departments of Scholarly Research,

Ifta', Daw`ah, and Guidance

`Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz!

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134- Performing obligatory Salahs on a plane while sitting

Q: I was sent on a assignment and the time of the Salah (Prayer) came in while I was aboard the plane, and therefore, I offered Salah on the plane by nodding my head without knowing what direction I faced during the Salah. Please, provide me with a beneficial answer about the validity of my Salah. If it is not valid, should I delay it until I arrive?

A: It is a Muslim's duty when aboard a plane or in the desert to exert every possible effort to know the direction of Salah by asking those who may know or by looking for signs, so that one will pray in the correct direction. If this is difficult, then one should do one's best to use discrimination in determining the direction of the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer). Thus, one's Salah will be valid even if one makes a mistake in determining its direction because one has done their best to identify it. It is not permissible to perform the obligatory Salah aboard a plane or in the desert without exerting efforts to know the direction of the Qiblah. If one prays without doing so, then one must repeat the Salah because one did not fear Allah as much possible by attempting to determine it.

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As for praying while seated, there is no blame in doing so if one is not able to perform the Salah while standing; similar to the situation of one on a the ship who prays while sitting when it is not possible to pray standing. The evidence for this concession is Allah's (May He be Glorified and Exalted) saying: ﴾So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴿ However, there is no blame in delaying the obligatory Salah until arrival, as long as there is enough time to perform it at its due time. As for supererogatory Salahs, it is not obligatory to face the Qiblah while on board a plane, a car or riding an animal. It was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he used to offer supererogatory Salahs while ridding his camel in whatever direction he was heeding. However, it is recommendable to face Qiblah upon pronouncing Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer) and then complete the Salah facing the direction one is traveling, as authentically reported from the Hadith of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) which supports this ruling. Allah is the One who grants success.

135- Shortening Salah by those who travel daily

Q: Is it permissible for a driver who travels daily to shorten Salah (Prayer)?

A: If a driver or anyone travels for a distance at which Salah can be shortened, which is about eighty kilometers, then it is permissible to shorten Salah following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet). However, there is no blame if one performs complete Salah. On the other hand, according to the opinion of the majority of scholars, if one predetermines to stay in a place for a period of more than four days, then one should perform Salah in its complete form.

Similarly, if one is a traveler among a group of residents, then one should perform complete Salah with them and should not pray individually for the sake of shortening the Salah. Shortening Salah is optional and performing them in congregation is mandatory, and the mandatory takes precedence over the optional. Authentic reports from the Prophet (peace be upon him) prove that a traveler must offer complete Salah when praying with residents. May Allah guide us all to the right way and the straight path!

136- Shortening Prayers while Traveling

Question: Is it permissible to shorten and combine prayers by those who travel extensively outside the Kingdom or commute between the different towns of the country, such as taxi drivers and businessmen when their journeys cover the distance required for shortening and combining prayers?

These people take the same ruling of occasional travelers. According to the majority opinion of Muslim scholars, they have the licence to shorten and combine the prayers just as occasional travelers do, in view of the generality of the legislative evidence related to these cases. Moreover, we have not come across a valid proof opposing the general application of this ruling. As for the opinion of some jurists who see that the one traveling with his family with no prior intention to stay in a particular place does not have the licence of shortening the prayers, this is a weak opinion and has no valid evidence as viewed by Abu Muhammad Ibn Qudamah (may Allah bestow His Mercy upon him) in his book: Al-Mughni

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137- Prayer of the Traveler by Train

Question: I extensively travel long distances by train during which I miss two or three prayers and I do not find a suitable place aboard to pray. Is it permissible to perform these prayers combined before or after their prescribed times, or should I pray each prayer in my seat ?

It is obligatory for you and all Muslims traveling by train to perform prayers in their prescribed fixed times; unless they travel for long distances, in which case they can combine Dhuhr with 'Asr together and Maghrib with 'Isha together at the time of either of them. It is worth mentioning that prayers should be performed according to the best of one's ability and circumstances: standing or sitting. If one cannot bow or prostrate, one may even perform his prayer by symbolic nodding of his head, lowering it further down to stand for prostration. Allah [Exalted and Sublime Be He] states: (So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can) It is also obligatory on the train driver to be cooperative and stop at suitable destinations where passengers on board can perform prayers in their prescribed fixed times. May Allah guide us all to gain beneficial knowledge and to act upon it. Indeed, He is Most Benevolent, Most Generous.

138- Combining Two Prayers by a Traveler

Question: If one travels abroad or is on a day trip in the daytime in Ramadan and is willing to observe fasting but combine and shorten prayers. Is it acceptable to do this?

If one travels for some lawful purposes, such as to have a picnic or for any other matter, and he covers a distance that permits shortening the prayers - which is nearly eighty kilometers - then he has the licence to shorten the prayers and break the fast. As for combining two prayers, this issue needs some more clarification. If one travels with the intention to settle in a place for a period of time, then it is recommended for him to perform each prayer at its prescribed time. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) shortened prayers when he stayed in Mina during the Farewell Pilgrimage and he did not combine them.

However, if a traveler is aboard any conveyance and continues the journey, then it is best to combine prayers following the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Allah is the Grantor of Success.

139- Adhkar when combining Salah

Q: Should a person who combines Salah (Prayers) read the Adhkar (invocations and Remembrances said at certain times on a regular basis) after the first or the second Salah?

A: A person can recite as much as they can of the Adhkar after the first Salah and recite them again after the second one.

140- Making up for Five Obligatory Daily Prayers in order

Q: I arrived at the airport in New York coming from Los Angeles on my way to Riyadh, and at that time I had not performed the Zhuhr (Noon) or `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers. There I found a group of people offering Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer whom I joined in the second Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) and after they finished I made up for what I missed of the Maghrib Prayer. Thereafter, I prayed the `Isha' (Night) Prayer with them and then I prayed Zhuhr and `Asr prayers individually. Is what I did correct, and if not, what should I do? Am I obligated to do anything regarding what I have done? Please guide me,

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may Allah reward you with the best!

A: If a person offers the Maghrib and the `Isha' Prayers in congregation while they are unaware that they have not offered Zhuhr and `Asr Prayers, there is no blame. However, if the person is aware that they have not offered Zhuhr and `Asr Prayers, they should repeat the Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers after offering Zhuhr and `Asr Prayers, since it is obligatory to offer the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers in order. May Allah grant us success!

141- Shortening and Combining Prayers by Pilgrims in Makkah

Question: I combined and shortened Dhuhr with 'Asr prayers in Makkah in the day of At-Tarwiyah (i.e. the eighth day of the Month of Dhul-Hijja). Was this act of mine legally permissible?

If one is not a resident of Makkah and arrives there in the fourth day or after the fourth day of the Month of Dhul-Hijjah, and in the day of At-Tarwiyah (i.e. the eighth day of the Month of Dhul-Hijjah) in Makkah he shortened and combined Dhuhr with 'Asr prayers,

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then there is no sin on him. But those who are residents of Makkah and live there permanently, they should neither shorten nor combine the prayers in Makkah; they must perform complete prayers, each in its prescribed fixed time. On the other hand, if one arrives in Makkah on the fourth day of the Month of Dhul-Hijjah or after that, then one may combine and shorten the prayers, though in this case shortening the prayers without combining is more recommended as it conforms to the practice of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). In general, shortening the prayer means to perform a four Rak'ahs prayer as two only; whereas, combining the prayers means to perform Dhuhr with 'Asr prayers together and the Maghrib with 'Isha prayers together. It should be noted that some people confuse combining prayers with shortening them. So, to clarify this we say, combining prayers means, for instance, to perform Dhuhr and 'Asr prayers together at the time of either of them, and performing Maghrib and 'Isha prayers together at the time of either of them. Therefore, when scholars mention shortening prayers, they mean performing the four Rak'ahs prayer as two Rak'ahs only, each prayer at its prescribed fixed time.

142- Shortening of Prayers

by Pilgrims in Makkah

Question: I performed pilgrimage about seven years ago. When being there, I used to shorten the prayers with the Imam and repeat them afterwards as complete prayers on my own. I also threw the pebbles in the prescribed days for throwing, beginning with the day of sacrifice (i.e. tenth of the Month of Dhul-Hijjah) and the three consecutive days. I hurled the pebbles at the pole in the middle of the place believing that it was the object of pelting. I was not sure if the pebbles fell inside the specified area or outside it. What is the ruling regarding these acts?

If the case is as you mentioned regarding throwing the pebbles, then you are religiously bound to make an expiation, by sacrificing a sheep. If you cannot sacrifice a sheep, then you must fast for ten days. For, your case takes the same ruling of one who had completely missed out throwing the pebbles.

As for your completion of prayers individually after performing them as shortened with the Imam, your repetition stands on no valid proof. Your prayer with the Imam was legally accepted. It is reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) led the people in prayer in 'Arafah, Muzdalifah and Mina and he shortened them. He did not issue a command to the residents of Makkah to repeat their prayers in complete form. Allah [Exalted and Sublime Be He] says: (Indeed in the Messenger of Allâh (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) you have a good example to follow)

During his Farewell Pilgrimage, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded the Muslims, saying: (Take your (Hajj) rites from me.)

143- Shortening Maghrib Prayer

Q: What is the ruling on a person who performs the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer in Muzdalifah as only two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer)?

A: If a person offers Maghrib Prayer as two Rak`ahs, they must repeat it. Maghrib Prayer cannot be shortened according to the Ijma` (consensus of scholars). Thus, this person must repeat it as three Rak`ahs as well as `Isha' (Night) Prayer because `Isha' Prayer cannot be offered except after Maghrib Prayer.

144- Performing Complete Prayers by Pilgrim's while fulfilling the Rites of Hajj

A person performed 'Isha prayer as four Rak'ahs on the day of At-Tarwiyah (i.e. the eighth day of the Month of Dhul-Hijjah) in Mina. Was that act of his legally permissible? Should one who happened to observe the prayer with him call this to his attention?

Nothing is required of this person. Pilgrims, however, should shorten prayers as two Rak'ahs. But, whoever completes them as four Rak'ahs, there is no sin on him, though, one has not followed the Sunnah if he offers complete prayer.

145- Shortening Prayers by Pilgrims

Question: Is it permissible for the residents of Makkah to shorten prayers while in Mina? Are they still allowed to shorten the prayers when they go home during the day?

Residents of Makkah should shorten the prayers as other pilgrims do. During his Farewell Pilgrimage, the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not require the pilgrims among Makkah residents to perform complete prayers. He did not specifically command them and say: 'O people of Makkah! Perform complete prayers.' Therefore, whether they follow others and shorten the prayers, or they perform complete prayers,

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there is no sin on them. Yet, once they return to Makkah they should perform prayers in its Mosques in a complete form. In all cases, they should perform complete prayers in congregation in the Mosque, not in their homes. But when they pray in Mina with others they are permitted to shorten their prayers to two Rak'ahs, during pilgrimage. However, if they complete the prayers as four Rak'ahs, there is no sin on them as mentioned above. This is in line with what some scholars' view, who say that the people of Makkah should perform complete prayers all the time. The reason they are not allowed to shorten the prayers is that moving from one place to another to fulfill the rites of Hajj is not virtually considered 'traveling'.

Question: We live in an apartment in Al-'Aziziyyah district and we shorten the Dhuhr and the 'Asr prayers. Mina is at a short distance from where we are staying. Some of us are originally from Riyadh and some from Jeddah. The question is: Should Makkan pilgrims shorten prayers while in Makkah during the three days of Tashreeq (i.e. eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth of the Month of Dhul-Hijjah)?

Yes, the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) gave licence to the people of Makkah to shorten the prayers as other pilgrims do and he did issue a specific ruling regarding them. They shortened the prayers with him in Mina and 'Arafat, combining them while in 'Arafat and Muzdalifah, while shortening them in Mina. All praise be to Allah. Therefore, when the residents of Makkah perform pilgrimage, they should shorten the prayers as other pilgrims do. As for non-pilgrims, they must complete prayers as four Rak'ahs. May Allah guide us all to the right path.

146- Friday Prayer by Pilgrims

Is it obligatory for pilgrims to offer the Friday prayer, or does the Noon prayer suffice them if the Friday prayer is the following day?

The pilgrim is essentially required to offer the Noon prayer. However, if one offers the Friday prayer with non-pilgrims, then this fulfills the obligation.

147- Shortening Prayers by Travelers if they settle in Makkah more than four days

Question: What is the ruling concerning pilgrims shortening their prayers when staying more than four days in Makkah?

If a pilgrim plans in advance to stay in Makkah Al-Mukarramah four days or less

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then, according to the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), he should shorten the four Rak'ahs prayer to only two, following the practice of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) during the Farewell Pilgrimage. If one intends to stay more than four days, then as a precaution, one should offer complete prayer as four Rak'ahs. This is the opinion of the majority of Muslim scholars.

148- Pilgrims' Prayer in Mina is the Recommended Act as the Sunnah dictates

Is offering the prayers in Mina more meritorious for pilgrims than offering it in Al-Masjid Al-Haram?

Yes, prayer in Mina is more meritorious for the pilgrims. It is reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stayed in Mina and offered all prayers there. One should follow the practice of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) by staying in Mina at all times, night and day. Therefore, the pilgrims' prayer in Mina is more recommended and fulfils the act of Sunnah.

149- Traveler's Shortening Prayers when Residing for a short while at a Destination

We are travelers and there is a nearby Mosque where we are staying in Al-'Aziziyyah. Should we pray in this Mosque or at our residence place? ?

In this case you have the choice. If you shorten the prayers at your residence, there is no sin on you. And if you opt for offering the prayer in the mosque, then you should perform complete prayers with other worshippers. Travelers have the option of either shortening their prayers or offering them complete with local people. However, if one is traveling alone, then one must not pray individually; he should offer the prayers with people in congregation and follow them, whether they are shortening the prayers or completing them. But in all cases, he is not allowed to offer prayer on his own.

Question: Yesterday I offered the Maghrib prayer in an area a few meters away from 'Arafah. Then I walked until I came near Muzdalifah where I found a group of Non-Arabic speaking people setting out to offer the prayer. I asked them if they were going to offer the Maghrib or the 'Isha prayer, but they did not understand my question. However, I joined them in the prayer with the intention of performing the 'Isha prayer, only to discover later that they were offering the Maghrib prayer. When they stood up ready for the third Rak'ah I remained sitting and I concluded my prayer. Am I obligated to do anything regarding this, if my act was not right?

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This issue requires some explanation in view that you joined a group of worshippers offering the Maghrib prayer, while your intention was to offer the 'Isha prayer. The Maghrib prayer cannot be shortened, whereas the 'Isha prayer can be shortened in this situation. Therefore, most probably and more clearly, and Allah knows best, your prayer is valid because your intention was to offer the 'Isha prayer which can be shortened, whereas, the Maghrib prayer cannot be shortened, and it cannot replace the 'Isha prayer in this situation. Therefore, the most evidential and strongest opinion, Allah willing, is that your act was correct. However, if they were offering a four Rak'ahs prayer, then you should have completed four Rak'ahs with them. With regard to what you have done, it is, Allah Willing, sufficient for you.

150- Shortening Prayers for Non-Pilgrims

Is it obligatory for those who come to Mina and 'Arafah and have not yet entered into the state of Ihram to offer shortened prayers in the same manner as those in the state of Ihram ?

If one is a pilgrim, then one must offer shortened prayers in the same way as those in Ihram. If one is not a pilgrim and is a resident of Makkah, then one must offer four-Rak'ah prayers in complete form and not shorten them. If one is a pilgrim, then one is to follow the practice of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who during pilgrimage led the people in prayer and shortened them. He did not command residents of Makkah to offer prayer in complete form. Some

scholars explained that this is synchronous with the rites of pilgrimage, while others elucidated the shortening here on account of the long distance between Makkah and 'Arafat which validly makes one in the state of traveling. In any case, if they are pilgrims and they shorten the prayers along with other pilgrims, even though they are residents of Makkah, then there is no sin in this. However, if they complete their prayers to keep aloof from the juristic differences, then this would be accepted for them. All these actions are, Allah Willing, allowable. If one is not a pilgrim, then one must not shorten the prayers. Residents of Makkah must complete their prayers, because in such case they have no legal excuse such as traveling or pilgrimage.

151- Remembrance of Allah after Offering Prayers while Traveling

Question: Does the celebration of Allah's Names after obligatory prayers during travel take the same ruling as that made after optional prayers, or no remembrance should be said after the 'Asr and Dhuhr prayers during traveling?

Celebration of Allah's names after obligatory prayers is recommended whether one is traveling or not, during pilgrimage and outside it. When one concludes the obligatory prayer one should recite three times: I ask Allah's Forgiveness.

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Then one should say: "O Allah! You are peace and from You alone is all peace, blessed are You, O Possessor of majesty and honor" after each obligatory prayer: Dhuhr prayer, 'Asr prayer, Maghrib prayer, 'Isha prayer and Fajr prayer, whether one is on a journey or at home, during pilgrimage and outside it, by men and women. Upon the conclusion of prayer one should say: "I ask Allah's Forgiveness, I ask Allah's Forgiveness, I ask Allah's Forgiveness. O Allah! You are peace and from You alone is all peace, blessed are You, O Possessor of majesty and honor." Then one should say: "None has the right to be worshipped except Allah Alone, without partners, to Him belongs all sovereignty and praise and He is omnipotent over all things. There is no might nor power except with Allah, none has the right to be worshipped except Allah and we worship none except Him. For Him is all favor, grace and glorious praise. None has the right to be worshipped except Allah and we are sincere in faith and devotion to Him, even that the disbelievers detest it. O Allah, none can prevent what You have willed to bestow and none can bestow what You have willed to withhold, and no wealth or majesty can benefit anyone, as from You alone is all wealth and majesty." All these celebration formulas were said by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) whenever he concluded the Dhuhr prayer, the 'Asr prayer, the Maghrib prayer, the 'Isha prayer and the Fajr prayer. In addition, after the Maghrib prayer and the Fajr prayer it is recommended to say ten times: "None has the right to be worshipped except Allah Alone, without partners. To Him alone belongs all sovereignty and praise, He gives life and causes death, and He is omnipotent over all things", whether one is traveling or at home.

Question: We work in a state bureau located in Mina and we provide care and basic assistance to the pilgrims during Hajj season. Some of us are residents of Makkah and others live outside it where they travel a distance that qualifies them to shortening the prayer. Some of us are performing Hajj while others are not. The one who leads us in prayers is a pilgrim and a resident of Riyadh. He leads us in all prayers and everyone is satisfied with him. Should those praying behind him on the Day of 'Eid and the three following days of At-Tashreeq (i.e. the eleventh, the twelfth and the thirteenth of the Month of Dhul-Hijjah) shorten their prayers, even though they are residents of Makkah ?

Pilgrims are recommended to shorten their prayers at all times. But residents of Makkah and those who come to Makkah but are not current pilgrims, they should not shorten prayers unless they are travelers. The one who is a resident of Makkah or the one who comes to Makkah only for work and is not for pilgrimage, they should not shorten the prayers with pilgrims; but they should offer complete prayers as four Rak'ahs.

152- Shortening Salah in Mina: a ruling applicable generally to all Hajjis

Q: Is Hajjis' shortening and combining Salahs (Prayers) in Mina, `Arafah and Muzdalifah on the Day of Tarwiyah (8th of Dhul-Hijjah), the Day of `Arafah (9th of Dhul-Hijjah), the Night of Juma` (the ninth night of Dhul-Hijjah) and the Days of Tashriq (11th, 12th and 13th of Dhul-Hijjah) generally applicable to

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all Hajjis including the residents of Makkah Al-Mukarramah? If shortening and combining Salahs is generally permissible for all Hajjis, is this limited to Al-Masha`ir (Sacred sites where the rites of Hajj are performed: Mina, `Arafah and Muzdalifah)? Or, is it a characteristic of Hajj in the sense that it is allowed in Al-Masha`ir and elsewhere in any of the precincts of Makkah? It is related by Muslim in his Sahih (Authentic Hadith Book) on the authority of `Aishah (that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) offered the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer on the Day of `Eid-ul-Adha (the Festival of the Sacrifice) **at Makkah** upon performing Tawaf-ul-Ifadah (final obligatory circumambulation of the Ka`bah in Hajj).) **Did he (peace be upon him) shorten the Salah (Prayer) or perform them in full? If the former, which is more likely, he supposedly led a group of Hajjis in Prayer including some residents of Makkah who had performed Tawaf-ul-Ifadah with him on that day. Did they shorten their Salah following him, or did he (peace be upon him) gave them the same order as the one he gave while in Al-Abtah before assuming Ihram (ritual state for Hajj): "People of Makkah, complete your Prayer, because we are a group of travelers"?**

A: According to the well-known and authentically reported practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him) during his Farewell Hajj, all Hajjis should shorten but not combine Salahs in Mina and should combine and shorten Salah while in `Arafah and Muzdalifah, whether they are from remote places or from Makkah or its vicinities. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not command the residents of Makkah to perform Salah in full.

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Actually, the Prophet (peace be upon him) shortened the Zhuhr Prayer he offered in Makkah on the Day of `Eid-ul-Adha. Moreover, he (peace be upon him) continued to shorten Salah until he returned to Madinah as authentically reported on the authority of Anas and others. In fact, he did not command the residents of Makkah to offer Salah in full because this is well-known that it need not be said to the residents of Makkah.

However, it is reported that he (peace be upon him) commanded them to do so on the day of the Opening of Makkah, when he led the people in Salah which he shortened at Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah). Although the reliability of the Sanad (chain of narrators) of this last narration is disputed, it is supported by the basic ruling that the residents of Makkah and elsewhere should not shorten Salah because they are not travelers, bearing in mind that shortening prayers is allowed for travelers only. May Allah grant us success!

153- Combining Prayers while Traveling

Question: There are some people who when traveling, for example, from Riyadh to Al-Kharj, which is about eighty kilometers journey, combine the prayers during their journey. Is this act correct?

A traveler is permitted to combine the prayers or offer every prayer at its prescribed fixed time. However, if one settles in a place, then offering every prayer at its fixed time is best as was the practice of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in Mina during the Farewell Pilgrimage.

154- Prayers in Mina and during At-Tashreeq Days

Question: What is the ruling on combining prayers while being in Mina? Also, some people combine the prayers at all times during their travel, whether they are riding or stopping for rest. They combine prayers in Mina in the day of At-Tarwiyah (i.e. the eighth day of the Month of Dhul-Hijjah) and during At-Tashreeq days (i.e. the eleventh, the twelfth, and the thirteenth of the Month of Dhul-Hijjah) on the grounds that they are travelers. Please give us a Fatwa regarding the right way of performing prayers during these times, may Allah reward you?

In Mina it is recommended to shorten the prayers without combining them. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) shortened his prayers without combining them when being in Mina, as he was temporarily staying and resting in that place. Therefore, in this condition it is recommended to shorten the prayers without combining them. Similarly, a traveler is recommended when stopping for rest in a place to shorten the prayers without combining them, though he will not be sinful if he combines the prayers. It is reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) combined the prayers in Tabuk, while he was temporarily staying there. Therefore, shortening with combining of prayers and shortening without combining them were both reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). On the other hand, when he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was staying in Mina during the Farewell Pilgrimage, which he performed nearly three months before his death, he shortened his prayers without combining them. Furthermore, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to shorten the prayers in Mina performing four Rak'ahs prayers as two Rak'ahs without combining the prayers. He used to perform Dhuhr, 'Asr, Maghrib and 'Isha at their prescribed times. Such was practice of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) during pilgrimage. He said: ﴾Take from me

your rites of Hajj﴿ and Allah, the Almighty, says: ﴾Indeed in the Messenger of Allâh (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) you have a good example to follow﴿

155- Shortening Prayers when traveling for a month

Is it permissible for one who is traveling for a month or more to shorten prayers ?

A traveler is permitted to shorten prayers as long as he is in the state of traveling. But if one intercepts the his journey and stops off at a place for more than four days and beyond, then according to the majority opinion of the scholars, one should offer complete prayers. However, some scholars view that a traveler can continue shortening the prayers as long as he keeps the intention of traveling and until he returns home. However, in order to do what is more adequate, one should offer complete prayers if one intends to stay beyond four days because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) shortened his prayers during the Farewell Pilgrimage when he arrived on the fourth day of the Month of Dhul-Hijjah and continued shortening them until

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he set out to Mina on the eighth day of the Month of Dhul-Hijjah, and that was the period he planned to stay there in advance. Therefore, if one intends to stay for more than four days, he should offer complete prayers. This is seen as a precaution. But if one intends to intercept the journey for four days or less, then he may shorten his prayers and there is no sin in this. Some scholars are of the opinion that he may shorten his prayers unconditionally until he returns home. But, if one stops off for more than four days, i.e., he planned beforehand to stay in a place for a period of four days or beyond, then one should offer complete prayers.

156- Shortening Prayers by Travelers when Returning Home after Prayer Time

Question: If I know that I will not arrive home except after the Adhan of 'Asr or the Adhan of 'Isha, is it permissible to shorten the prayers in this case ?

You have the choice to shorten that prayer and offer it on the way, or you may wait until you arrive at home and offer it as a four Rak'ah prayer with the people.

157- Combining Prayers when Stopping at a Place during Traveling

Question: What is the ruling on combining prayers if one stops off on the way before the Dhuhr prayer and rests for some time to have lunch and then resumes the journey one hour before the time of the 'Asr prayer? Is it permissible to combine the prayers in this case?

Combining prayers when traveling is permissible and it is a licence in Islamic Shari'ah. If one is riding on his conveyance, then shortening the prayers becomes even recommended as reported in the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Therefore, if one rests before the time of the Dhuhr prayer and wishes to depart after the time of the Dhuhr prayer, then one may combine the Dhuhr prayer with 'Asr prayer together prior to his departure. One may also delay combining the prayers by departing in the afternoon or before sunset, then combine the Dhuhr prayer with 'Asr prayer or the Maghrib prayer with the 'Isha prayer. If one departs before sunset, then one may not dismount his conveyance and it is not obligatory for him to do so. Rather, one should delay the Maghrib prayer to combine it with 'Isha prayer when one dismounts at the time of the 'Isha prayer. Similarly, if one departs before the time of the Dhuhr prayer and continues on the journey, then one should delay the Dhuhr prayer to be combined with the 'Asr prayer as a delayed combination. This is what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did during his journeys.

158- Advanced or Delayed Combining of Prayers

Question: If I am traveling and I want to combine the prayers, should I offer Jam'i Taqdim or Jam'i Ta'khir (advanced or delayed combination of the prayers) ?

You may do what is most convenient for you and people traveling with you. If you stop off at a place during a journey in which you are allowed to shorten the prayers and to combine them, it is best not to combine the prayers. You and your companions should offer every prayer at its prescribed fixed time as was done by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) during the Farewell Pilgrimage when he was staying in Mina. If you are on the go during the journey, then it is better to combine prayers in advance if your departure occurs prior to the prescribed fixed time of the former prayer. Otherwise, delayed combination of the prayers is preferable. Authentic reports from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the Hadith narrated on the authority of Anas and others support this ruling.

159- Traveler's combining Jumu`ah and `Asr Prayers

Q: Can a traveler combine and shorten Zhuhr (Noon) and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers on Friday?

A: A traveler is not obligated to perform Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer. He should offer Zhuhr Prayer and there is nothing wrong in combining Zhuhr Prayer with `Asr Prayer.

However, if the traveler offers Jumu`ah Prayer with the residents of any place, then he should not combine it with the `Asr Prayer, but he should perform `Asr Prayer at its fixed time.

160- Shortening Salah behind a resident Imam

Q: Once I was traveling and the `Isha' (Night) Prayer was due, so I offered two Rak`ahs (unit of Prayer) only behind the resident Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer). Is my Salah (Prayer) valid?

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A: Your Salah is not valid and you should make it up four Rak`ahs. It was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) what proves that when a traveler offers Salah behind a resident Imam, he should offer the complete four Rak`ahs. May Allah grant us success!

116- Traveler's shortening Salah behind a resident Imam

Q: A traveler entered the Masjid (mosque) while the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) was reciting the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer) of `Isha' (Night) Prayer. He joined the Imam with the intention of shortening the `Isha' Prayer. Was this right? If it was not right, what should he do now? Please guide us, may Allah reward you with the best! On the other hand, if the Imam was reciting the first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer), was it sufficient for the traveler to perform the last two Rak`ahs with the Imam with the intention of shortening `Isha' Prayer?

A: If a traveler offers Salah behind a resident Imam, he should offer the four-Rak`ah Salah (Prayer consisting of four units)

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in full, even if he joins the Imam in some of this prayer. This is in accordance with the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). May Allah grant us success!

162- Traveler's offering Prayers behind a Resident

Question: A difference of opinion occurred concerning a traveler offering prayers behind a resident and the method of making up for the Friday prayer by an individual who misses it out. Some people are of the opinion that the traveler who offers the prayer behind a resident Imam should conclude his prayer upon completing two Rak'ahs, and if one misses out the Friday prayer he should perform it as two Rak'ahs only. However, what we have learned and studied under the scholars of the Sunni School is that if the traveler leads the prayer, he should shorten his prayer and conclude it upon completing two Rak'ahs and the resident followers behind him should complete their prayer four Rak'ahs to the end. We also learned that if one misses out the Friday prayer in the Mosque, he should make up for it as four Rak'ahs in the same manner as Dhuhr prayer. On another issue, we used to know that the Messenger (peace be upon him), on the Day of 'Arafah, which then coincided with a Friday, offered Dhuhr prayer and 'Asr prayer shortened and combined and his recitation was quiet. However, we have no proof for his quiet recitation during these two prayers, and therefore, we appreciate a clarification from you on this.

The right opinion which is unanimously agreed upon by the righteous Muslim predecessors and the contemporary eminent scholars is what you had learned and mentioned in the question, and not what the opponents hold against it. According to the right opinion, if a traveler offers prayer behind a resident, he should offer complete prayers. Some reports in the Musnad of Ahmad and the Sahih of Imam Muslim through the Hadith narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) furnish evidence that supports this opinion. On the other hand, if the traveler is acting as the Imam, then it is recommended for him to shorten the four Rak'ahs prayer to two Rak'ahs only, and the resident followers behind him should complete four Rak'ahs as was done by the Prophet (peace be upon him) on the Day of Al-Fath (i.e. the Prophet's return to Makkah on the eighth year of Hijrah). If someone misses out the Friday prayer, then the opinion of the four Imams and the majority of the scholars is that he should offer it as Dhuhr prayer and he cannot perform it as Friday prayer. The opinion which says that the one who misses out the Friday prayer may offer it as two Rak'ahs only is unacceptable and does not concord with the Islamic authentic proofs. Therefore, such erroneous view should not be taken into consideration. As for the proof for the Prophet's (peace be upon him) quiet recitation in the Dhuhr prayer and the 'Asr prayer on Friday when he was at 'Arafah, it is authentically recorded in the Sahih of Imam Muslim on the authority of Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him).

Question; I am currently a pilgrim and I have offered the 'Isha prayer behind the Imam of the Sacred House. When the Imam stood up for the third Rak'ah, I concluded my prayer thinking that it is permissible for me to shorten the prayer. Was my prayer valid? If I must make up for it, should I repeat it as a complete prayer, or a shortened one, keeping in mind that I am still staying in Mina and in

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the status of a traveler? Please give us the right opinion regarding this. May Allah reward you greatly.

If the traveler offers prayer behind a resident Imam, he must offer complete prayer as indicated in the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Therefore, your conclusion of the prayer behind the resident Imam when he stood up for the third Rak'ah was a mistake and you should make up for this missed out prayer as four Rak'ahs, even though you were a traveler. The rule is that whoever offers prayer behind a resident Imam must offer it as a complete prayer and if the follower concludes the prayer upon finishing two Rak'ahs, then he is mistaken and must repeat it as four Rak'ahs. The traveler offering prayer behind a resident Imam must offer complete prayer, and if he is to make up for it, he must perform it as four Rak'ahs. Joining prayer with a resident Imam obligates the offering of complete prayer.

Question: Last year I traveled to Al-Ahsa' and at Maghrib time I entered the Mosque for prayer. After we finished the Maghrib prayer, the congregation set out for the 'Isha prayer immediately and I performed it with them because I did not know what to decide in this circumstance. After I had left the Mosque I asked them about this and they told me that they are Shiites. Am I mistaken for joining them in the prayer? Please furnish me with a the correct opinion. May Allah reward you greatly.

You must repeat the 'Isha prayer because you performed it before the falling of its prescribed fixed time.

Also, you should not pray with them again because their creed is extremely erroneous. Shiites in general hold excessively counterfactual and extremist standpoints concerning the position of the household of the Prophet (peace be upon him). They branched into many groups and sects. Regarding the 'Isha prayer which you performed with them, you must repeat it because you prayed it before its due time. The majority of Shiites, except those of them whom Allah (Exalted be He) with His Mercy saved from error, commonly combine the Dhuhr prayer with the 'Asr prayer and Maghrib prayer with the 'Isha prayer.

163- Combining prayers then delaying the journey

Your Eminence Shaykh `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz, **may Allah protect you!**

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

I planned to travel from my city, and therefore, I combined Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and `Isha' (Night) Prayer at the time of Maghrib Prayer without shortening them because I had the plan to start the journey before the time of `Isha' Prayer; however, I could not start my journey until after the Adhan (call to prayer) for the 'Isha Prayer. The question is: Was my act right? Please provide us with a useful answer, may Allah reward you!

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Wa `alaykum as-salam warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you too!)

You need to repeat the `Isha' Prayer because you offered it before its prescribed time and before you started the journey. May Allah guide all of us to the right way. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh!

164- Traveler offering prayers missed at residence

Q: I offered `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer in my city and I went on a journey. During my journey I remembered that I had offered the `Asr Prayer without Wudu' (ablution). Should I offer it as a shortened prayer or as a four-Rak`ah Salah (Prayer consisting of four units)? What is the ruling if it was the opposite; namely, I offered the `Isha' (Night) Prayer during my journey while shortening it, and when I came back, I remembered that I had offered it without Wudu': should I perform it as a shortened prayer (i.e. two Rak`ahs only) or as a complete Prayer (i.e. four-Rak`ah Salah)?

A: If, during the journey, you remembered that you had offered the 'Asr Prayer or another four-Rak`ah Prayer at your residence without Wudu', then you should make it up as four Rak`ahs, because at its prescribed time you were obligated to perform it as complete Prayer of four-Rak`ahs. By the same token, if you remembered that during the journey you had performed the Zhuhr (Noon), the `Asr

or the `Isha' Prayers without Wudu' while shortening them, then you need to repeat them as complete Prayers of four Rak`ahs, because the reason for shortening the prayer, which is the journey, becomes non-existent. May Allah grant us success!

165- Combining Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers during rainfall

Q: Has it been authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he combined Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers during rainfall?

A: There is a Hadith that proves the permissibility of combining Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers during rain. Therefore, there is nothing wrong in combining them if there is rain, fear or disease. Moreover, the Salaf (righteous predecessors) used to combine Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers during rainfall. It is permissible to do that if the Adhan (call to Prayer) of Maghrib is being made and there is heavy rain, but if the rain does not harm the people or it is light rain, then a person should not combine them. But if they do this, they need to repeat the `Isha' Prayer.

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166- Combining Prayers Due to Heavy Rain

Question: Sometimes when there is heavy rain at the time of Maghrib, the Maghrib prayer is performed and immediately after that the 'Isha prayer is performed. So, the two prayers are performed combined, for the sake of the safety of the worshippers due to the rain. Is it permissible to combine these prayers, though nowadays life conditions are drastically different from the past, since things are much easier and more convenient for people, such as transportation?

This is a concession from Allah (Exalted be He). Therefore, if there is heavy rain, then there is no harm in combining Maghrib and 'Isha prayers, since it is a license in Islamic Shari'ah. Combination here is recommended as a mercy for people and facilitating the performance of rites for them, so their safety will not be risked by the rain. If they do not wish to combine the prayers in the mosque, then they are allowed to offer them in their due times at home. It was reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he permitted the companions to offer prayers at home during heavy rain. He (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Perform the prayers in your dwellings.﴿

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The point is that if the rain results in messing up the markets and causing harm to the people due to slippery muddy roads, then it is recommended to combine Dhuhr prayer with 'Asr prayer together and Maghrib prayer with 'Isha prayer together. If one does not wish to combine them and it proved difficult for him to go out for the congregational prayer, then he is allowed to perform prayers at home, as he then is excused from attending the congregational prayer in the mosque by the intent of the above-mentioned Hadith.

167- Combining Dhuhr and 'Asr Due to Heavy Rain

Sometimes the weather is extremely cold and it is heavily raining. Can we combine Zhuhr and 'Asr prayers together (at the time of 'Asr prayer)?

If the rain is so heavy and the roads are messed up with mud that it becomes too difficult for people to observe the prayer in the Mosque, then there is no harm in combining Dhuhr prayer and 'Asr prayer together and Maghrib prayer and 'Isha prayer together, following the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the sound reports of the companions (may Allah be pleased with all of them).

168- Combining Two Prayers With no Excuse of Illness or Heavy Rain

Did the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) combine two prayers in urban places without the excuse of illness, heavy rain or slippery mud ?

It is reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) combined two prayers without the excuse of fear, heavy rain or travel. Scholars concluded that this occurred in the beginning of Islamic legislation or due to a certain excuse such as widespread infection or an epidemic disease. Later on, this concession was ruled out and the combining of two prayers was only sanctioned when there is an excuse of disease or travel. The same ruling applies to rain when it becomes too difficult for people to go to the Mosques fearing the risk of muddy slippery roads. Thus, it becomes permissible for them to combine two prayers due to this legal excuse.

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Book of Fear Prayer

169- Ruling on the Fear Prayer

Is it allowed for soldiers who operate on weaponry in the frontline to offer the Fear Prayer? And can this be possible even when there is no war?

Soldiers should not offer the Fear Prayer unless they are encountering the enemy or are afraid of being attacked by the enemy. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾When you (O Messenger Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) are among them, and lead them in As-Salât (the prayer), let one party of them stand up [in Salât (prayer)] with you taking their arms with them; when they finish their prostrations, let them take their positions in the rear and let the other party come up which have not yet prayed, and let them pray with you taking all the precautions and bearing arms. Those who disbelieve wish, if you were negligent of your arms and your baggage, to attack you in a single rush﴿

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It is reported in the two Sahihs on the authority of Salih Ibn Khawwat through those who offered the Fear Prayer with the Prophet (peace be upon him) on the day of the Battle of Dhatir-Riqa' ﴾That a group formed a row and prayed along with him, whereas another group faced the enemy. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) led the first group in prayer through one Rak'ah, then he remained standing while they completed the second Rak'ah of the prayer by themselves. After that, they departed and formed a row facing the enemy, while the second group came and he led them in the remaining Rak'ah, after which he remained sitting while they completed the second Rak'ah of the prayer by themselves. He then led them in salutation and concluded the prayer.﴿ This is the narration as recorded by Imam Muslim .

It is also reported in the two Sahihs on the authority of Ibn 'Umar who said: ﴾I joined the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in an expedition toward Nagd. When we confronted the enemy, the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) led us in congregational prayer. A group of us lined and prayed with him while the rest engaged in fighting the enemy. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) performed one Rak'ah with two prostrations, and then the people (who were praying with him) left to replace the other group who had not prayed yet. This latter one proceeded so he performed one Rak'ah and two prostrations with them, and then he concluded the prayer. Those who joined the prayer with him in the second group performed one more Rak'ah with two prostrations by themselves and completed the prayer.﴿ This is the narration as recorded by Al-Bukhariy

It is also reported on the authority of Jabir that he said: ﴾I offered the Fear Prayer with the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). We lined up in two rows, one row behind him with the enemy lines standing between us and the Qiblah. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, 'Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest)' and we all repeated this after him. He then bowed and we all bowed after him. Then he raised his head after bowing, and we all raised our heads following him. He then prostrated with the first line behind him, while the row in the rear faced the enemy. Then when the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) completed the prostration and stood upright, the row behind him followed him. As they were doing so, the rear row fell down in prostration then they stood up. Synchronously, the rear row came to the front line and the front row went to the rear. Then the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) bowed down and we all bowed down after him. He then raised his head from bowing and we also followed him. He and the row behind him, which had formerly been in the rear, fell down in prostration in the first Rak'ah, whereas the rear row faced the enemy. And when the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the row behind him have finished the prostration, the rear row fell down and prostrated themselves. Then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) made Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and we also made Taslim after him.﴿ Reported by Muslim in his Sahih. Allah is the Grantor of guidance and success.

Book of Friday Prayer

170- Minimum Number of Worshippers for the Friday Prayer

Question: A student from the Islamic University seeks to know the preponderant juristic opinion concerning the minimum number of worshippers required for offering the Friday Prayer ?

Scholars (may Allah bestow His Mercy upon all of them) held many different opinions regarding this matter, the most famous of which is that the minimum number of worshippers for the Friday Prayer is forty men. This is the reported opinion of the two eminent Imams: Malik and Ash-Shafi'iy (may Allah bestow His Mercy upon both of them), and a group of scholars favoured this opinion. It is also the well-known opinion reported from Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (may Allah bestow His Mercy upon him). The proponents of this view supported their argument with the narration that the first Friday Prayer held in al-Madinah was offered by this number (i.e. forty men). However, another group of Muslim scholars viewed that Friday Prayer can be validly offered by at least twelve men. This is the opinion of Rabi'ah Ibn Abi 'Abdir-Rahman, the great Sheikh and teacher of Imam Malik Ibn Anas (may Allah bestow His Mercy upon both of them). A third group still argued that Friday prayer can be validly held with the presence of a minimum of four men, and this the chosen opinion by Imam Abu Hanifah (may Allah bestow His Mercy upon him).

A fourth group considered that Friday prayer can be legally observed by a minimum congregation of three men only, and this is the opinion of Imam Al-Awza'iy, who was the Imam of the people of the Levant (al-Shaam) in his time (may Allah bestow His Mercy upon him). A similar opinion was also ascribed to Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (may Allah bestow His Mercy upon him) by a group of his disciples, like Al-Muwaffaq in his book: Al-Muqni', the author of the book: Al-Furu' and some other scholars. This opinion was also favoured by Shaikhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah bestow His Mercy upon him). A fifth group of scholars regarded that Friday prayer can be held by a minimum of two men. There are many other opinions regarding this matter and they were compiled by Abu Muhammad Ibn Hazm and others. However, we deem as the most correct opinion regarding this matter the one stating that Friday prayer can be held by three resident men, and this is for a number of reasons, of which we shall mention the following ones. First, the performance of Friday Prayer is a fundamental obligation for Muslims of all villages and territories and it is not permissible for them to leave it except with a valid excuse, and obviously there can be no excuse for three resident men to leave it. Second, three men is the least form of plural in the Arabic language and considering two as plural is in discordance with the apparent definition of the plural form in this language. Therefore, relating the religious evidences to what is linguistically precise in the language takes priority and is

more precautionary in matters of religion. Third, other opinions furnished no clear evidence obligating one to abide by their rulings. Hence, one should not consider them as valid and should adhere only to the opinion that demonstrates concrete proofs and keeps the truth seeker away from doubts and falling in sin. Fourth, if the minimum number of worshippers for establishing the Friday prayer is more than three, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would have indicated this to his companions and guided his Ummah (i.e. Muslim Nation) to that ruling. Since the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not issue that condition, then it becomes effectively evident that it is not a must to have more than three resident men for the establishment of the Friday prayer. As for three resident men, it is obvious that the performance of Friday prayer is obligatory for them since it is the least number of the plural form in Arabic that stands for a congregation. And as known from several religious texts and the unanimous opinion of the scholars, Friday prayer cannot be performed except in congregation

and three is the least number of plural as stated above.

From 'Abdul 'Aziz Bin 'Abdullah Ibn Baz to his honor Brother M. 'Ayn. F., the headmaster of the Elementary School for Qur'an Memorization in Jeddah, may Allah guard him from all forms of harm.

Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be with you. To continue:

I have looked at your question registered at the Administration of Scientific Researches and Ifta, numbered 752, dated: 24/2/1407 A.H., and I would like to advise you that what has been mentioned regarding the stipulation of having forty resident men in order to establish the Friday Prayer is in agreement with the opinion of Imam Ahmad (may Allah bestow His Mercy upon him) and it is the well-known opinion recorded in the books of Al-Hanabilah. On the other hand, other scholars did not stipulate the attendance of forty resident men as a condition for establishing the Friday prayer, and this is the preponderant opinion. Hence, it can be safely said that three or more resident men of a village or a city form an adequate number to establish the Friday Prayer. May Allah guide us all to do what pleases Him. May Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be with you.

President

of the Administrations of Scientific Researches, Ifta, Call and Guidance.

171- Settling down as a Condition for the Obligation of the Friday Prayer

Is settling down a requirement for the obligation and the validity of the Friday Prayer; i.e, will it not be binding without it?

According to the most correct opinion of Muslim jurists, Friday Prayer is not obligatory if the worshippers are not staying in their home place. Therefore, it is not binding upon Muslims during journeys, but it is obligatory for people in their home towns and villages. The Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not strictly offer Friday prayer during his journeys and he did not make it an obligation upon the vagabond Bedouins. Therefore, Friday prayer is to be established in the place in which believers permanently live and reside.

172- Offering Friday Prayer by Temporary Residents

Is it an obligation upon us to establish the Friday Prayer here in Spain, keeping in mind that there are no Mosques in this country, and we only came to this country

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for studying?

The great scholars of Islam view that Friday prayer is not an obligation upon you and all Muslims in your circumstance. In fact, there is difference of opinion regarding the validity of the Friday prayer, if you perform it. You are obligated to offer only Dhuhr prayer instead, because your situation is similar to that of travelers and vagabond Bedouins. Friday prayer is obligatory only upon people permanently residing in their home place. The proof for this is that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not bid travelers and nomads to establish the Friday prayer. Moreover, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his Companions (may Allah be pleased with all of them) did not offer it during their journeys. It is also authentically reported that, during the Farewell Pilgrimage on the Day of 'Arafah, which coincided with Friday, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) offered the Dhuhr prayer and did not establish a Friday prayer. Neither did he command the pilgrims with him to perform it, because they took the same ruling as that of travelers. Praise be to Allah, none of the eminent Muslim scholars held a different view from this, except a weak view reported from some of the Tabi'un (Followers, the generation after the companions of the Prophet) which lacks valid proof and can not be relied on. However, if there is a group of Muslim residents offering the Friday prayer in the country where you are temporarily staying for studying or doing business, then it is recommended for you and those in your circumstance to offer the Friday Prayer with them and you will get an extra reward for establishing the Friday prayer. It worth mentioning that some Muslim jurists viewed that Friday prayer becomes obligatory upon the traveler when he temporarily stays in a place in which the Muslim residents establish the Friday prayer, and where his circumstances do not qualify for shortening the prayer.

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173- Travelers Leaving Combining Prayers and Friday Prayer when Staying in for a while

Question: Our Grand Sheikh! During the weekend, Thursdays and Fridays, we often go out for a picnic and most places we go to are at a distance valid for shortening prayers. Therefore, we shorten and combine Dhuhr prayer with 'Asr prayer. Is this permissible? We have also come to know that it is not permissible for a Muslim to deliberately leave the offering of Friday Prayer with Muslims for more than three weeks. Is this correct? Is there a limit on the number of times one may miss out the Friday Prayer, even if he travels extensively or often goes out for a picnic? Please provide us with correct opinion regarding this important issue, because people are anxiously occupied with it. May Allah reward you greatly.

It is permissible for a traveler to shorten and combine two prayers based on the authentic Hadiths reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) regarding this matter. However, it is better if a traveler leaves combining the prayers whenever he stops off for rest during his journey following the practice of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) during his Farwell Pilgrimage. He rested in Mina during the days of At-Tashreeq (i.e. the eleventh, the twelfth and the thirteenth of the Month of Dhul-Hijjah) and did not combine two prayers at that time; he offered each

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prayer at its prescribed time. Thus, this is clear proof that leaving the combination of prayers in similar situations is preferable for the traveler whenever he temporarily stops to rest in a place. On the other hand, if the traveler is aboard his mount, then combining two prayers becomes preferable for him, following the example of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It is reported that whenever he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) set out on a journey before the sun declines towards the west, he used to delay Dhuhr prayer and combine it with the 'Asr prayer as a delayed combination. And whenever he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) set out on a journey after the sun had declined towards the west, he used to offer 'Asr prayer before its time and combine it with the Dhuhr prayer as an advanced combination. In the same way, whenever he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) departed from his house on a journey before sunset he used to delay the Maghrib prayer and combine it with the 'Isha prayer as a delayed combination of the two prayers. However, if he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) departed after sunset, he used to pray 'Isha before its time and combine it with the Maghrib prayer as an advanced combination. It is noteworthy that shortening the prayers during travel is only recommended as Sunnah, but there is no sin on the person if he offers prayers complete while traveling.

The distance of shortening prayers is eighty kilometers or greater, and it used to be covered in one day and one night by camel. This is the preponderant and most precautionary opinion of Muslim scholars regarding the shortening distance. A traveler is not obligated to offer the Friday prayer, and it will not be valid if he performs it. He should perform only Dhuhr prayer unless he passes by a village or town where he offers the Friday prayer with its inhabitants. In this situation it will replace

the Dhuhr prayer. It must be emphasised that a Muslim who is not traveling is not allowed to miss the Friday Prayer, even for one time. He should always offer it with other Muslims, because it is an obligation prescribed on him for this time of the day. All Muslim settling residents must offer it, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: ﴿Let

those reckless people stop deliberately leaving out the Friday prayer; or Allah will put a seal on their hearts so that they will be among the constant heedless.﴾ Reported by Imam Muslim in his Sahih .

The threat of sealing on the heart of the one who inexcusably leaves the Friday prayer more than three times is also reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Therefore, every Muslim settling resident has to be very attentive of this obligation and should offer the Friday Prayer with other Muslims in his locality. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿O you who believe (Muslims)! When the call is proclaimed for the Salât (prayer) on Friday (Jumu'ah prayer), come to the remembrance of Allâh [Jumu'ah religious talk (Khutbah) and Salât (prayer)] and leave off business (and every other thing). That is better for you if you did but know!﴾

We ask Allah to guide all Muslims and make them keep offering the Friday prayer, to fulfil all other obligations, and to avoid all prohibitions. Indeed, He is All-Hearing and Near to us.

174- Some Rulings on the Friday Prayer

Question: We are a group of more than fifty youth and we went out for a picnic to a park outside the city of Riyadh at a distance of about forty kilometers. Our picnic coincided with Friday and we offered Dhuhr prayer because we were travelers. However, some brothers disapproved our act and said: Your trip does not take the ruling of a journey. We request your Eminence to explain the ruling regarding this situation, and what is the distance that is regarded in Islamic Shari'ah a journey? Is not it enough for the traveler to be just outside the city borders, as we understood, to apply all rulings of Islamic Shari'ah pertinent to him? May Allah reward you greatly for this.

What you did is legally right because you were not at your permanent residence and you were not travelers either, because the distance mentioned does not amount to the traveling distance that the Shari'ah explained. Therefore, you ought to offer complete Dhuhr prayer, and you were not obligated to offer the Friday prayer, since you were not the residents of that place. Allah is the Grantor of guidance and success.

175- Time of Taking Ritual Shower for Friday Prayer

Question: Is it permissible to take a ritual shower for the Friday prayer at 3:00 A.M on Friday? Would I then rise to the rank of those who go early to the Mosque and thus receive full reward?

He who takes a ritual shower on Friday and goes early to the Mosque will, insha'allah, receive the great reward that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had promised those who do so. However, it is recommended to take a shower just before heading to the Mosque. If one takes a shower before the Fajr time, his act will not be conforming to the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Allah is the Grantor of guidance and success.

176- Virtue of First Row in Congregational Prayer and Nearness to the Imam

Should those who go early to Al-Masjid Al-Haram (i.e. The Sacred House) to offer the Friday prayer draw near to the place of the Imam or find a place in the shade and avoid

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the heat of the sun so that they will be more apt for making supplication, worshipping Allah, reading the Qur'an and humbling their hearts. It is known that the Imam gives the sermon while standing in the area of circumambulation around the Ka'bah?

It is more virtuous for the worshippers to perform prayer in the first row - if possible, or as close to it as one can get. The worshipper should exert his efforts to be in the first line or close to it. Moreover, he should avoid sitting under the scorching heat of the sun and look for a place in the shade where he is safe. He should also seek to be close to the first row, or to find a spot in the first row, if it is not under the direct heat of the sun.

177- Raising Voices with Supplication During the Sermon

Question: We know that idle talking in the Mosque during the Friday Prayer is not allowed, and whoever does so his Friday prayer will be null and void. However, there is an authentic Hadith indicating that the hour of accepting supplication is on Friday, from the time the Imam ascends the pulpit until he concludes the prayer. In view of this, we supplicate the Almighty Allah during this time, and sometimes our voices go loud. Also, when the Imam mentions the name of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), we send blessings on him in a relatively loud voice. It may also happen that during the sermon, when the Imam makes a mention of one of the great righteous Imams or when people are moved by the sermon, some of them utter some praising expressions loudly. I find it difficult to reconcile these acts with the Hadith that prohibits idle talk during the sermon. Is the uttering of these supplications and expressions considered as idle talk? Please provide us with the correct view about this. May Allah grant you success.

Supplication to Allah and sending blessings upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) are not considered idle talk. However, you should make them discreetly and you should not raise your voice when doing so. If you hear something that gives rise to supplication and you invoke Allah unobtrusively

such as saying: Amen (i.e. O Allah Accept) after the Imam's supplication and sending blessings on the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah upon him), then there is no sin on you for doing this. The pivotal point is that you do these things privately, between you and your Lord, in a way that does not disturb other worshippers around you. However, if you remain silent and do not say anything, then there is no sin on you. First and foremost, Muslims are commanded to remain silent and listen attentively to the sermon. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: ﴾If you (even) ask your companion to keep quiet on Friday while the Imam is delivering the sermon, you have indeed engaged in vain talk.﴿ Although the advice in this Hadith is an act of promoting what is right and forbidding what is wrong, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) still called it vain talk. Therefore, one should listen attentively to the sermon in order to benefit from it and to have his heart humbled. However, if one makes private supplication when the occasion requests sending blessings upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) discreetly or one simply says: Amen (i.e. O Allah Accept), then we hope that there is no sin for that. Offering prayer is greater in reward than listening to the sermon; yet it is allowed to do these things during it.

In general, you are allowed to supplicate and send blessings upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) discreetly between you and your Lord, provided that you do not disturb other worshippers. Those who raise their voices during the sermon are certainly mistaken, since it is not allowed for them to do so. They should be quiet, listen attentively and behave well during the sermon. If one is keen to get his supplication

accepted, he should make it privately during the time when the Imam sits between the two parts of the sermon and during prostration in the prayer. You should listen attentively to the sermon with an awake heart in order to benefit from its teachings. If you say Amen (i.e. O Allah Accept) after the supplication of the Imam or you send blessings upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) discreetly, then we most hope that there will be no sin on you for doing so. In general, you should observe quietness and avoid disturbing those around you in the mosque. May Allah guide us all to the right path and to the best way of understanding our religion.

178- Raising Hands in Supplication During The Sermon

Question: During the Friday sermon, the Imam supplicates the Almighty Allah and raises his hands to the heavens and the worshippers in the mosque say: Amen (i.e. O Allah Accept) after each statement of his supplication. However, we have learned through your program that saying Amen (i.e. O Allah Accept) after the Imam's supplication is not reported in the Sunnah and so is not permitted.

My question is: What should the audience do when the Imam raises his voice in supplication? Should they follow him and raise their hands, or what should they do? We also appreciate

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if you could provide us with the correct view regarding the ideal length of the sermon? Which is better for the Imam: to make it short or long? What are the preferable subjects that he should tackle? Should he merely narrate stories of past generations, explain juristic rulings, or should he focus on the tenets of faith? Please provide us with the correct view! May Allah reward you greatly for guiding us.

The Imam should preferably make his sermon short and not lengthy. In the authentic Hadith, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated: ﴾Elongating the prayer and shortening the sermon is a sign of a man's deep understanding of Islam. So extend the prayer and shorten the sermon, for there is charm in precise expression.﴿ Reported by Imam Muslim in his Sahih from the Hadith narrated on the authority of 'Ammar Ibn Yasir (may Allah be pleased with him). This clearly indicates that according to the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), it is recommended for the Imam to lengthen his prayer and shorten the sermon. He should also select subjects which awaken the hearts of Muslims and bring the worshippers near to Allah and distance them from incurring His Wrath. He should include in his sermon the juristic rulings that people should have knowledge about them, explain what Allah has prescribed and what He has prohibited for people. Awakening the hearts may also be achieved by giving ethical lessons through narrating useful stories, recitation of Qur'anic verses which include admonition, remembrance of Allah, as well as hope

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and fear. He should not raise his hands when making supplication during the sermon, unless he is asking Allah for Istisqa' (i.e. invoking Allah for sending rain), in which he may raise his hands asking Allah for rain as did the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when he invoked Allah for rain during the Friday sermon. As for the regular sermon in which there is no supplication for rain, the Imam should not raise his hands. He should invoke Allah without raising his hands, following the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). If the worshippers say Amen (i.e. O Allah Accept) inaudibly, then, Allah willing, there is no sin in this. Similarly, worshippers may not raise their hands in supplication except during invocation for rain when the Imam raises his hands. As for regular Friday sermon and 'Eid sermon, the hands should not be raised during

supplication, by the Imam and the worshippers. Raising the hands is approved in the supplication for rain as stated above, which is reported in the practice of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

179- Talking While the Imam is Delivering the Sermon

Question: We are a team of technicians working on broadcasting the Friday prayer live from the Sacred House via satellite to the whole world, and, as you know, there is great benefit for Muslims in this. During our work, it is necessary to give verbal directions to our team members. Is it a sin if we converse during the sermon, considering that our communication is imperative for achieving the work, which provides great benefit for the public ?

If you are offering the Friday prayer with people, then you should not talk. You should record the acts of the prayer without talking. However, if you have already offered the Friday prayer in another Mosque or you come to record it after it has been shot by another team, then talking during that recording will not harm you. But you may not talk while the Imam is delivering the sermon and you are offering the Friday prayer with him, for whoever offers the Friday prayer should remain quiet until the Imam finishes the sermon.

180- Supplication During the Friday Sermon

Question: During the Friday prayer, and while the Imam was delivering the sermon, I noticed that the person sitting next to me kept pointing with his right index finger all the time. His act aroused my curiosity, and after the prayer I asked him about that. He told me that he was supplicating during the sermon and was pointing with his right index finger because he had heard that supplication during the sermon is worthy to be accepted by Allah. I told him that the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded us to remain quiet during the sermon, but he was not satisfied with this comment. Please explain the truth regarding this issue?

During the sermon one must listen attentively and should not make any verbal expressions, whether supplication or anything else. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: (If you (even) ask your companion to be quiet on Friday prayer while the Imam is delivering the sermon, you have indeed made vain talk.) Agreed upon its authenticity.

In this Hadith the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) rendered the act of forbidding what is wrong, i.e., asking another worshipper to keep quiet, while the Imam is delivering the sermon, as vain talk. So, how about other types of speech? The Hadiths exhorting worshippers to listen attentively to the Imam

during the sermon are numerous. As to the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) statement: (Indeed, there is an hour during Friday prayer, in which supplication is never turned down. This hour is between the time when the Imam ascends the pulpit and the end of the prayer.) reported by Imam Muslim, this Hadith refers to supplication in its prescribed times: during prostration, when the Imam sits between the two parts of the sermon, and after the Tashahhud and prior to the conclusion of the prayer with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the prayer). All these are times of supplication in which it is hoped that supplication will be answered. Allah is the Grantor of guidance and success.

181- Raising Hands for Supplication During the Friday Sermon

Question: What is the ruling regarding the worshippers raising their hands following the Imam in his supplication during the Friday sermon? What is the ruling of raising one's voice saying: Amen (i.e. O Allah Accept)?

Neither the Imam nor the worshippers should raise their hands to supplicate the Almighty Allah during the Friday sermon. The Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his rightly-guided Caliphs did not do that act. However, if the Imam invokes Allah during the Friday sermon for sending rain, then it is allowed

for him and the worshippers to raise their hands in supplication This is in view that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) raised his hands when he prayed for rain during the Friday sermon, and the people followed him and raised their hands. Allah [Exalted and Sublime Be He] said: ﴾Indeed in the Messenger of Allâh (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) you have a good example to follow﴿ till the end of the verse.

As to the worshippers saying: Amen (i.e. O Allah Accept) after the Imam's supplication during the sermon, there is no prohibition in doing that, provided that it is discreet. Allah is the Grantor of guidance and success.

Q: Some people raise their hands while making Du`a' (supplication) during the Friday Khutbah (sermon) while others do not. Moreover, some people raise their hands while making Du`a' during the Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) or after finishing the supererogatory Salahs (Prayers) while others do not do so. Please tell us about the Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) regarding raising hands while making Du`a'.

A: Raising the hands while making Du`a' is Sunnah and one of the causes of Du`a' being accepted, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Allah is characterized by modesty and reserve,

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and is ashamed to turn away His servant empty-handed when he raises them to Him. (Related by Abu Dawud, Al-Tirmidhy and Ibn Majah, and is judged to be authentic by Al-Hakim.) Moreover, it is related by Muslim in his Sahih (Authentic Hadith Book) on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ❨Allah (Exalted be He) is good and accepts only that which is good. Allah has commanded the believers to do that which He commanded the messengers. Thus, He (Exalted be He) said: ❨O you who believe (in the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism)! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with, and be grateful to Allâh, if it is indeed He Whom you worship.❩ He also said: ❨O (you) Messengers! Eat of the Taiyyibât [all kinds of Halâl foods which Allah has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables, fruits, etc.] and do righteous deeds.❩ Then he mentioned [the case of] a man who, having journeyed far, is dishevelled and dusty and who spreads out his hands to the sky [saying] : "O Lord! O Lord!" - while his food is unlawful, his drink unlawful, his clothing unlawful, and he is nourished unlawfully, so how can he be answered!❩

It is also authentically reported in many Hadith that the Prophet (peace be upon him) raised his hands while making Du`a' for rain and while throwing pebbles at Al-Jamrah Al-Kubra (largest pebble-throwing area)

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and Al-Jamrah Al-Wusta (second or middle pebble-throwing area) on the Days of Tashriq (11th, 12th and 13th of Dhul-Hijjah) during Farewell Hajj in addition to many other occasions. However, in the occasions of Du`a' during which the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not raise his hands, we should not raise our hands during which following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Examples of these occasions include Du`a' during the Friday Khutbah, `Eid (Festival) Khutbah, between the two Sujuds (Prostrations), before Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and after concluding the obligatory Salahs (Prayers). Actually, the Prophet (peace be upon him) is not authentically reported to have raised his hands in all these occasions. No doubt, we are required to follow the Prophet's example concerning what we should and should not do. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) said: ❨Indeed, in the Messenger of Allâh (Muhammad peace be upon him) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the Meeting with) Allâh and the Last Day, and remembers Allâh much.❩ May Allah grant us success!

182- Awakening One Who is Overtaken by Sleep During the Friday Sermon

Some worshippers pass into a slumber during the Friday Sermon. If someone awaken them, does this render his prayer invalid ?

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It is recommended to awaken them by some gesture, not by actual talk, because it is not permissible to talk during the sermon. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: (If you (even) ask your companion to be quiet on Friday prayer while the Imam is delivering the sermon, you have indeed made vain talk.) Its authenticity is agreed upon. In this Hadith the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) described speaking during the sermon as vain talk, even if it is an act of promoting what is right. This is a proof for the obligation to listen attentively to the sermon and for the prohibition of talking during the sermon. Allah is the Grantor of guidance and success.

183- Sending Blessings Upon the Prophet Muhammad During the Sermon

Question: A brother named A. M. S. from the State of Arizona in the United States of America asks: If the Imam in his sermon during the Friday prayer made mention of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), should we also conform to him and send blessings on the Prophet? ?

It is permissible to send peace and blessings upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when

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his name (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is mentioned during the Friday sermon, the 'Eid sermon and other remembrance sessions. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: ﴾May his nose be soiled with dust, the one in whose presence mention is made of me and he does not supplicate for me.﴿ (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

184- Delivering Sermon and Leading Prayer Without Wearing a Head Cover

Is it permissible to deliver the Friday sermon and lead people in prayer while not wearing a head cover ? Please provide us with the correct fatwa regarding this matter, may Allah reward you greatly.

It is recommended to wear head cover, for it is a means of adornment as mentioned in the verse declaring, "Take your adornment at every place of worship". However, wearing it is not a prerequisite for delivering the sermon or leading the prayer. Therefore, there is no sin if one offers prayer without wearing a head cover of a turban. It should be noted that men in the state of Ihram offer prayer without

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any head cover. The head cover is just a means of adornment and thus, if one offers prayer or delivers a sermon without wearing it, his sermon and his prayers are still valid. However, it is best to wear it because Allah [Exalted and Sublime Be He] says: (O Children of Adam! Take your adornment (by wearing your clean clothes), while praying [and going round (the Tawâf of) the Ka'bah,]) One should conveniently follow the dressing norms as practiced by the rest of the the people in the society during prayer and outside it, lest the oddity of his dress may give rise to people's curiosity and indulge them in unnecessary questions: "Why this, and why that"? Also, there is no sin if the Imam delivers the sermon and delegates another worshipper to lead the prayer. But, it is only recommended if delivering the Friday sermon and leading the prayer are undertaken by one person, as was the practice by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

185- Preaching and Adminition Prior to the Friday Sermon

Question: In some Muslim countries it has become a fixed custom that the Imam gives short preaching to the audience before he ascends the pulpit. Is this permissible? Also, is it recommended to recite Surah Ya-Sin for a dying person ?

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The Imam's custom of giving a brief preaching to the audience prior to ascending the pulpit was not practiced in the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). As soon as he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) entered the Mosque on a Friday, he would head straight to the pulpit, sit and wait for the Mu'adhdhin (i.e. the one who calls to prayer) to make the Adhan (i.e. call to the prayer). Then, he would commence the sermon. There is no proof that he used to preach before the sermon. In view of this, the right direction is that once the Imam reaches the pulpit he should sit until the Mu'adhdhin makes the Adhan and finishes it. Only then he may start the sermon. As for preaching before that, it is not allowed for the Imam and he should follow the direction as mentioned above.

As for the recitation of Surah Ya-Sin for a dying person, there is a Hadith reported regarding this, though it is judged by some scholars as a weak narration. Nevertheless, we see that the recitation of the Holy Qur'an in general for a dying person is good and there is no sin in it.

186- The Duty of Praising Allah

And Sending Blessings Upon The Prophet During the Friday Sermon

Question: I offered the Friday prayer behind a young Imam who started the first part of the sermon with praising Allah and offering peace and blessings upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Then he finished it abruptly and sat, but without saying the ending formula that most Imams often make when finishing the first part of the sermon. Then he rose and began the second sermon, following on the same

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topic of the first part of the sermon, without praising Allah or sending peace and blessings upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He did not conclude it also with sending peace and blessings upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) or with supplication, contrary to what we normally hear from Imams at the end of the sermon. After he completed the sermon he just said: Now you may rise for offering the prayer. Could you please explain to us the correct view about what this Imam had done. Also, are there certain rules for the sermon that the Imam should observe? May Allah reward you greatly for this.

It is the obligation of the one who delivers the Friday sermon to praise Allah during both parts of the sermon, to send peace and blessings upon His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and to testify that there is none worthy to be worshipped except Allah and that Muhammad is His sincere servant and Messenger. Then, he preaches to the people, admonishes them and recites some Qur'anic verses. Allah is the Grantor of guidance and success.

187- Accepting Salary for only Leading Friday Prayers

There is a Mosque in a remote desert area which is open for congregational prayer only on Fridays and the two 'Eids. Is the salary that its Imam receives lawful for him in this case or not?

As long as this Imam was appointed to lead the Friday prayer, then there is no sin in taking the salary. However, if people come regularly to this mosque for offering the five daily prayers, then he should be present and lead them in these prayers and he is not allowed to neglect this duty. But, if no one usually comes to offer the five daily prayers in this Mosque, then there is no sin on the Imam if he does not turn up. It is sufficient for him to conduct the Friday prayer and to deliver the sermon, as well as to administer the 'Eid prayers with their sermons. As for of the salary he receives, there is no sin in accepting it. However, if there is a suspicion of deception to the Ministry of Endowments regarding this situation, such as that he had told the officials that this Mosque is in an urban area and congregation prayers are regularly conducted therein five times a day, then he is not allowed to receive the salary because of this prohibited deception. But, if the officials are already aware that this Mosque has no congregational prayer except on Friday and yet appointed an Imam for it, then there is no sin in accepting the salary. It should be noted that vagabond Bedouins are not obligated to offer the Friday prayer, but they are required to offer only Dhuhr prayer. However, if there are

three or more permanent residents in the vicinity of the Mosque, then they are required to offer the Friday prayer. And passing vagabond Bedouins may also join them in offering the Friday prayer.

188- Time for

Women to Offer Dhuhr Prayer On Friday

Question: When should women offer Dhuhr prayer on Friday? Should they offer it after the first Adhan or after the second Adhan? Or should they offer it whenever it is convenient for them? Can they offer it at the same time it is being broadcast live on TV?

Women should offer Dhuhr prayer on Friday at the prescribed time for Dhuhr prayer like any other day, that is, after the declining of the sun towards the west.

Ruling on permitting those who perform Salat-ul-`Eid not to offer Jumu`ah and Zhuhr Prayers (when `Eid occurs on Friday)

From `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz to the honorable brother Sheik A. M., may Allah guide him to good. Amen.

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

Attached hereto is a copy of the letter sent to us by His Excellency Sheikh `Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Humayd the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Council attached to which is a copy of the letter sent to him by our brother Sheikh M. N. including some fatwas supposed to be yours. We chose to write to you because your fatwas referred to above conflict with the body of Shari`ah (Islamic law) evidence and the views of the majority of scholars. We exhort you not to give such fatwas again, to pay more attention to Shar`y (Islamically legal) evidence and to carefully examine issues before issuing a fatwa. It is better to consult with other scholars regarding controversial issues so that you may issue fatwas thereon only after careful consideration, taking your time and being totally convinced of the view you have based on strong Shar`y grounds. It is well-known to any farsighted and knowledgeable person that

the seeker of knowledge should not depend on strange opinions or adopt them as a basis for issuing fatwa. Among the opinions supposed to be yours is that the obligation of making up for missed fasts or the ransom of feeding a poor person on the part of a pregnant or suckling woman is waived. This is in spite of the fact that this view is maintained by no scholar but Ibn Hazm in his book "Al-Muhalla". However, this is an aberrant view that is running counter to the body of Shari`ah evidence and the view of the majority of scholars and, therefore, should be disregarded. It should be known that the most preferable view in this regard is that only making up but not feeding is obligatory based on the general purport of Shar`y texts applicable to the sick and travelers that apply here as well. This is also based on the Hadith reported on the authority of Anas ibn Malik Al-Ka`by in this regard.

Another view of yours is deeming it obligatory on a person on a journey, desert inhabitants and women to offer both Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer and Salat-ul-`Eid (the Festival Prayer) taking no heed of Shar`y texts and the views of scholars to the effect that it as not obligatory on them. An exception to this is the opinion of Ibn Hazm who viewed in his book "Al-Muhalla" that these prayers are obligatory on travelers. However, this is an aberrant view that is running counter to Shar`y evidence and the opinion of the majority of scholars and, therefore, should be discredited.

Another view supposed to be yours is permitting those who perform Salat-ul-`Eid not to offer Jumu`ah and Zhuhr Prayers (when `Eid occurs on Friday). In fact, this is a clear error, for Allah (Exalted be He) made it obligatory on His servants to offer five Salahs (Prayers) during the day and the night, which is unanimously agreed upon by all Muslims. The fifth Salah on Friday is

Jumu`ah Prayer.

No doubt, this applies to the Day of `Eid even if it occurs on Friday. Moreover, were those who offer Salat-ul-`Eid permitted not to offer Zhuhr and Jumu`ah Prayers, the Prophet (peace be upon him) would have stated this explicitly, for people need to be instructed in this regard. Actually, the Prophet (peace be upon him) made a Rukhsah (concession) to those who attend Salat-ul-`Eid not to observe Jumu`ah Prayer and gave no mention of waiving Zhuhr Prayer. This indicates that offering Zhuhr Prayer remains obligatory in application of the basic ruling, i.e. the obligation of performing five Prayers during the day and night, supported by a body of Shar`y evidence and scholarly consensus and is therefore presumed to remain effective due to the absence of any other Shar`y evidence to warrant any change. In this regard, the Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported in many Hadith to have offered Jumu`ah Prayer on the Day of `Eid. One Hadith is related by Muslim in his Sahih on the authority of Al-Nu`man ibn Bashir to the effect (that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite in the Friday Prayer and in the `Eid Prayer "Glorify the name of your most high Lord" (Surah-Al-A`la) and Surah-Al-Ghashiyah. Sometimes `Eid would occur on Friday, so he would recite these two (Surahs) in both the prayers.) Concerning the narration that Ibn Al-Zubayr offered `Eid Prayer and did not go out to the people after that for either Jumu`ah or Zhuhr Prayer, this should be understood within the context that he offered Jumu`ah Prayer at the time of `Eid deeming it might waive the obligation of `Eid and Zhuhr Prayers. It might be also that he thought that the Imam, like any other person, is not required to offer Jumu`ah Prayer on such a day and can offer it as Zhuhr at home. In any case, the body of Shar`y evidence in general, applicable principles and the unanimous agreement of scholars that Zhuhr Prayer is obligatory on a Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) who does not offer Jumu`ah Prayer

are given priority over the practice of Ibn Al-Zubayr (may Allah be pleased with him) if it indicates that he believed those who attended Salat-ul-`Eid are permitted not to perform both Jumu`ah and Zhuhr Prayers.

If you still have problem with this, you are welcome to visit us in Al-Ta'if or to write to us concerning this identifying the points of confusion so that we can elaborate on it, In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills).

We ask Allah (Exalted be He) to guide us, you and all our Muslim brothers to deeply understand the religion and to hold fast to it and make us among those who guide and are rightly guided, for He is the Most Generous. I am waiting for a letter from you indicating that you have acknowlged this and will abide by it. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

General Chairman of the Departments of Scholarly Research,

Ifta', Da`wah and Guidance

`Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz

190 - Reading Surat As-Sajdah and Al-Insan in Friday's Fajr prayer

Q: Is it authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he used to recite in the Fajr prayer "Alif Lam Mim (Surat As-Sajdah)" and (Has there not been over man a period of time) **and is it authentically reported from him that he made Sujud (prostration) in (that) prayer?**

A: It is well-known for scholars that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to make Sujud during the Friday's Fajr prayer, and - as far as I know - this opinion is indisputable among Muslim scholars.

191- Consistency in Reciting Surahs Al-A'la and Al-Ghashiyah in Friday Prayer

Question: I notice that the majority of the Imams consistently recite Surah Al-A'la and Surah Al-Ghashiyah in the Friday Prayer, so often that people got the impression that

reciting these two Surahs in the Friday prayer has become obligatory and not recommended. Kindly advise the Imams with regard to the recitation of these two Surahs in order to remove any misunderstanding about the merit of their recitation from the minds of people. We also wish you to direct the Imams to the recitation of other Surahs and verses from the Book of Allah, which include great lessons of beneficial admonition to the worshippers or have special significance or relevance to the topic of the sermon?

The recitation of these two Surahs in the Friday prayer and the 'Eid prayer is recommended on the ground that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to recite them in these prayers. However, there is no harm if the Imam, from time to time, recites other Surahs so that people will not mistakenly get the impression that reciting these two Surahs in the Friday prayer and 'Eid prayer is obligatory. It is also reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) occasionally recited Surah Al-Jumu'ah and Surah Al-Munafiqun in the Friday prayer, and in other times he chose Surah Al-Jumu'ah and Surah Al-Ghashiyah, which reads: ﴾Has there come to you the narration of the overwhelming (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)?﴿ The selection of these Surahs was made by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as a recommended Sunnah, but not as an obligation. Allah is the Grantor of guidance and success.

192- Reciting the Qur'an

for the Congregation Prior to Friday Prayer

Thirty minutes before the Adhan for Friday prayer, a Qur'an reciter assumes a position in front of the congregation and recites how long soever Allah wills him to recite from the Qur'an. Often, the recitation is not from Surah Al-Kahf and most of the congregation in the Mosque is anxiously annoyed by this, especially if the reciter's voice is not good. They also engage in side talk and keep whispering to each other during this recitation. At times, when the reciter has a beautiful voice, the recitation even distracts the worshippers from their prayer and inspires them to make some audible comments and clamor, due to their being moved by the recitation, or due to their admiration for and encouragement to the reciter. In any case, all these acts certainly disturb those engaged in prayer as well as those sitting quietly and privately calling on their Lord (Allah).

The question is: Are the above-mentioned acts permissible in Islamic Shari'ah? Please provide us with the correct view, may Allah bless you.

It is permissible for Muslims to recite the Qur'an while sitting in their row in the mosque in a way that will benefit them, provided that this does not disturb the worshippers or other reciters. As for obtrusive recitation which

disturbs the worshippers or other reciters of the Qur'an, it is, at least, reprehensible. It was reported in the authentic Sunnah that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came out of his house one night and found some people offering prayers in the Mosque. He directed them saying: ﴾"O people! You all are privately calling on Allah, so let not some of you raise their voices over others.",﴿ (or this was the meaning of his saying). Allah is the Grantor of guidance and success.

193- Imam Falling Sick

During the Friday Sermon and inability to administer the Prayer

Question: An Imam was delivering the Friday sermon and fell ill during the second part of the sermon, but he did not descend from the pulpit until he completed the sermon. He was unable to stand up due to the severity of the illness and thus missed out the prayer. However, after the prayer was over, he regained consciousness from that illness. Should he perform the prayer as a Friday prayer, since he regained consciousness before the elapse of the Friday prayer time, or should he perform it as Dhuhr prayer?

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Whoever does not catch at least one Rak'ah of the Friday prayer with the Imam should make up for it as Dhuhr prayer and not as Friday prayer. This is according to the meaning of the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: ﴾He who catches one Raka'h of the Friday prayer has not missed out the prayer.﴿ reported by Al-Athram. Since this person in the question did not catch any part of the Friday prayer with the Imam, then he should make up for it as Dhuhr prayer.

194- Jumu`ah Prayer

should not followed immediately by a subsequent Salah

**Q: I would like to have an explanation of this Hadith: It is reported on the authority of Al-Sa'ib ibn Yazid that Mu`awiyah said:** (When you have observed the Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer, you must not start another supererogatory Salah (Prayer) till you have spoken to some one or have shifted your place; because the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) ordered us not to follow up the congregational Salah with any other Salah until we have talked (to some one) or moved from our place.)

A: This Hadith is related by Muslim in his Sahih (Authentic Hadith Book). It indicates that it is impermissible for a Muslim to immediately follow Jumu`ah Prayer or any other Obligatory Prayer with another but should make a short break of talking or going out of the Masjid (mosque). It is to be noted that talking should be

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any kind of permissible talk such as Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah), such as saying after Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer): I ask Allah for forgiveness, I ask Allah for forgiveness, I ask Allah for forgiveness. O Allah, You are the source of peace and from You is all peace, blessed are you, O Possessor of majesty and honor. This is in addition to any other permissible utterances of Dhikr. Doing so serves as a short break indicating that the first Salah has clearly finished so that it might not be thought that the subsequent Salah is an integral part of the former. In other words, separation between the Obligatory Prayer and the subsequent one is required. Accordingly, one should not immediately follow the Jumu`ah Prayer up with a supererogatory Salah, so that neither one praying nor anyone else might think that the latter is an integral part of the former.

The same applies to other Obligatory Prayers such as Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night) and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers, which have to be separated from the subsequent Salah through permissible talk such as Dhikr or similar talk or through leaving the Masjid. By doing so, the two Salahs might not be thought to be interconnected.

195- Recommended

Supererogatory Prayer Following Friday Prayer

Question: Our Eminent Shaikh. First of all, please accept our heartfelt regards for your kindness in quickly answering the questions coming to you from Moroccan pilgrims. Now I have some queries.

How should we offer the supererogatory prayer following the Friday Prayer?

After the Friday Prayer, it is recommended to offer four Rak'ahs (i.e. Sunnah of the Dhuhr prayer), following the practice of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who said: ﴾When one of you has offered the Friday Prayer, he should follow it with four (supererogatory) Rak'ahs.﴿ Therefore, the supererogatory prayer following the Friday Prayer is to perform four Rak'ahs, and it is recommended to divide it into two (i.e. offering every two Rak'ahs discretely), with two Tasleems. This is the recommended way of offering it. But, if one offers it as two Rak'ah with one Tasleem, it will be sufficient for him. However, it is better to offer four Rak'ahs Sunnah after the Friday prayer. It is reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he used to pray two Rak'ahs at home after the Friday prayer. Nevertheless, his command to offer four Rak'ahs should be more effective and have more consideration. Thus, the proved act of Sunnah is to offer four Rak'ahs after the Friday prayer whether in the Mosque or at home, and it is recommended to offer them evenly divided with two Tasleems.

196- Virtue of Staying

in the Mosque after 'Asr on Friday

Question: Our Eminent Shaikh. If one wants to catch the last hour of supplication on Friday and spend it in the invocation of Allah (Exalted be He), does he have to remain in the very place

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wherein he offered 'Asr prayer? Or can he seek to attain this hour while sitting in his house or after having moved to another Mosque? Please provide us with the correct answer. May Allah reward you greatly.

The apparent meaning of the Hadiths reported in this regard is of general application. It indicates that whoever supplicates Allah at the vitreous time of supplication, his invocation is worthy of being accepted in the last hour on Friday. However, his supplication will have a greater chance of being accepted if he remains in the Mosque in which he intends to perform the Maghrib prayer. The Prophet (peace be upon him) described the situation of the seeker of this hour as: (while he is performing prayer,) and the one awaiting the prayer is as good as the one who offers it. Therefore, being in the place of performing prayer gives the waiting person a greater opportunity to have his supplication accepted. There is no sin on the sick person if he remains at home awaiting the prayer and engages in supplication. The same ruling applies to the woman who sits in the place in which she performs the prayer in her house waiting for the Maghrib prayer and engaged in supplication. By the same token, the sick person who retires in the place in which he has performed the prayer and invokes Allah (Exalted be He) following the 'Asr prayer on Friday will have greater chance of having his supplications accepted. What is recommended in the Islamic Shari'ah is that if one wants to supplicate Allah in this hour, he should head early to the Mosque in which he intends to perform Maghrib prayer on Friday and remain there until the Maghrib prayer and supplicate.

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From 'Abdul 'Aziz Bin 'Abdullah Ibn Baz to his Excellency our Respected Brother S. D. 'Ayn., the Imam of the Squadron of the Electronic War Engineering, a division of the National Guard based at Al-Shara'i` (Codes), may Allah protect him from all harm.

Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you. To continue:

With reference to your letter stating: Is it allowed for us to establish the Friday prayer in our camp during Hajj, keeping in mind that currently there is no Mosque in this camp? In addition, we want to know how can we offer the prayer in the camp. Some of us shorten the prayers and others offer them complete? Also, is it permissible for one to perform 'Umrah (lesser pilgrimage) on behalf of his living parents, though they are physically and financially able to offer Hajj and 'Umrah, by way of being dutiful and kind to them? One last question: does the sacrificial animal suffice for a man and his family including his mother? Please provide us with the correct Fatwa regarding these issues. May

Allah reward you greatly for this.

I would like to inform you that you are not obligated to offer the Friday prayer at your camp and it will not be valid if you perform it individually, because you are not permanent residents of this place. You should perform complete Dhuhr prayer without shortening it and you should not combine the prayers unless there is a nearby Mosque in which the Friday prayer is being established and you can perform the Friday prayer therein. In this case, you are obligated to offer the Friday prayer like other permanent residents.

Concerning the second question, it is not allowed for a Muslim to perform Hajj or 'Umrah on behalf of another, unless the earlier has first performed them for himself and the one on whose behalf it is performed is dead or incapable to perform Hajj or 'Umrah due to old age or some chronic illness. As to the third question, the sacrificial animal will suffice a man and his family, or a woman and her family, regardless of the number of dependents. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to slaughter one lamb for himself and his household.

May Allah guide us all to that which pleases Him, and may He help you do all kinds of good. May Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you.

President

Of The Administrations Of Scientific Researches, Ifta, Call And Guidance

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197- Performing Friday Prayer in Mina

Question: What is the ruling on those who offered Friday Prayer with one of the pilgrims groups in Mina today?

This act is not right and they have to offer Dhuhr prayer, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Dhuhr prayer on Friday in 'Arafat, where he delivered a sermon. He prayed Dhuhr and 'Asr prayers and did not offer Friday prayer. Therefore, the pilgrim is not obligated to perform the Friday prayer, but should pray Dhuhr in 'Arafah and during the days of Mina .

Book of the Two 'Eids Prayers

198- Places of Performing the 'Eid Prayer

Are Not Governed by the Same Rules for Mosques

From 'Abdul 'Aziz Bin 'Abdullah Ibn Baz **to his excellency the respected brother 'Ayn. Ghayn. 'Ayn., may Allah protect him from all harm.**

Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you. To continue:

With reference to your question registered in the Administration of Scientific Researches and Ifta numbered: 2984, dated: 29/7/1407 A.H. in which you asked about the ruling on offering supererogatory prayer before the 'Eid prayers:

I answer your question by saying that if the 'Eid prayer is offered in the Mosque, then he who comes to perform it should first offer the greeting of the Mosque prayer, even if he comes at the time in which it is disliked to offer prayer. This ruling is based on the preponderant opinion of Muslim scholars because there is a reason for performing this prayer as it falls within the general meaning of

the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: ﴾When one of you enters the mosque, he should not sit until he has offered two Rak'ahs.﴿

However, if the 'Eid prayer is offered in a place other than the mosque, then no supererogatory prayer is performed before the 'Eid prayer. This is in view that the place prepared for the 'Eid prayer does not take the same ruling as that of the mosque in all aspects, and there is no requested supererogatory prayer to be offered before or after the 'Eid prayer.

May Allah guide all of us to what pleases Him. Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you.

President Of The Administrations Of Scientific Researches

Ifta, Call and Guidance

'Abdul 'Aziz Bin 'Abdullah Ibn Baz

199- A Woman Leading Women in 'Eid Prayer

Question: Some years ago, women in our village gathered together and offered the 'Eid prayer perfectly on their own. Praise be to Allah, it was a well-versed woman who led them in the prayer. The reason for their gathering was that the place prepared for the 'Eid prayer for men was far away from the city, about two hours walking distance, and men did not allow women to walk that distance to perform the prayer. What is the ruling regarding the act of those women? Is it heresy in religion?

I have not come across a ruling that renders these women's act prohibited. 'Eid prayer is legislated for both men and women, and it is recommended to offer it in open areas outside the city. If it is hard for women to go out to offer it along with men, then they can perform it in their homes, individually or in congregation. Therefore, there is no sin on them in doing that and they will have great reward for performing it. .

Chapter on Salat-ul-Kusuf

200- Sighting the new moon

should be acted upon if legally confirmed

All praise be to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, his family, his Companions, and those who follow his guidance.

I have examined the article of Al-Riyadh newspaper, issue no. 6885, dated: 3/9/1407 A.H., by Dr. A. `A. L., may Allah forgive us and him, in which he decisively stated that it is impossible that Monday will be the first day of the Month of Sha`ban. He based his view on the lunar eclipse that took place on that night and on a quote from Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibnul-Qayyim (may Allah be merciful to both of them). He thus decisively stated that Monday is the thirtieth day of the Month of Rajab and, consequently, Tuesday will definitely be the first day of the Month of Sha`ban. According to his claim, it is impossible that Tuesday will be the first day of the Month of

Ramadan. Therefore, I consider it appropriate to explain to the readers that such talk is very dangerous and involves imprudently understanding the religion of Allah and His Messenger. It tacitly shuns rules authentically established by the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). By saying so, he gives preference to astronomical data over the rule inferred from the Qur'an and Sunnah that the beginning and the end of a lunar month is only determined by sighting the new moon or, otherwise, completing the month as thirty days. No doubt, the Prophet's (peace be upon him) judgments are enforceable during his lifetime and thereafter until the Day of Resurrection. This is because Allah (Exalted be He) sent him to all the worlds with a perfect Shari`ah (Islamic law) that is absolutely free of defects. In this regard, Allah (Exalted be He) said: ﴿This day, I have perfected for you your Deen for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islâm as your Deen.﴾ Undoubtedly, He (Glorified be He) knows the exact time of eclipses at all times. Nevertheless, He gave no command to His servants to draw any conclusion from the eclipse regarding determining the sighting of the new moon although He (Exalted be He) laid down through His Messenger (peace be upon him) certain eclipse-related rulings including offering Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer on a solar eclipse). As for astronomers' claim that a solar eclipse occurs only at the dark moon phase in which the moon is totally invisible, there is no reliable evidence to support this assumption or justify disagreeing with authentically reported Hadith of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him), even if supported by Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah and the erudite scholar Ibnul-Qayyim may Allah forgive both of them. No doubt, they were

fallible and like any other scholar were liable to express wrong opinions. In this respect, Allah commanded His servants whenever they dispute over any issue to refer it to the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and to accept His judgment and the judgment of His Messenger (peace be upon him) regarding the settlement of their disputes. To this effect, Allah (Exalted be He) said: ﴾O you who believe! Obey Allâh and obey the Messenger (Muhammad peace be upon him), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. And if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allâh and His Messenger (peace be upon him) if you believe in Allâh and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.﴿ He (Exalted be He) also said: ﴾And in whatsoever you differ, the decision thereof is with Allâh (He is the ruling Judge)...﴿ Moreover, He (Glorified be He) said: ﴾But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad peace be upon him) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.﴿

Furthermore, a group of scholars stated that a solar eclipse may occur during a moon phase other than the dark moon, which also applies to lunar eclipse which might take place when the moon is not full. Definitely, Allah (Glorified be He) is Able to do all things.

Although solar eclipse often happens at the dark moon phase, this does not mean that it cannot occur at any other lunar phase. The Prophet (peace be upon him) is authentically reported in many Hadith

to have enjoined that the moon sighting, or alternatively completing the month as thirty days, be the determiner of the beginning of a lunar month. Actually, many well-known Hadith to this effect are reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) and other Hadith collections. It must be stressed that enforceability of the rulings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) are not limited to his time, but extends to all subsequent generations until the Day of Resurrection, because he was sent to all humans. Allah (Glorified be He) sent him to all people and commanded him to convey to them His enactment regarding determining the beginning of the Month of Ramadan and other months. He (Exalted be He) knows the Ghayb (the Unseen) in the Heavens and in the Earth and knows that people will reach an advanced stage of observatories and astronomy in general after the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Moreover, He knows the exact time when eclipses will occur. Nevertheless, His Messenger (peace be upon him) is not authentically reported to have made determining the beginning the lunar month through eye-witnessing the new moon conditional upon coinciding with astronomical calculations or the non-occurrence of eclipse. No doubt, nothing escapes Allah's knowledge on earth or in the heavens; in the past or in the future until the Day of Resurrection. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾We are an illiterate nation; we neither write, nor know accounts. The month is like this and this and this (showing the fingers of both his hands thrice) and left out one thumb on the third time.﴿ In this Hadith the Prophet (peace be upon him) instructs his Ummah that a lunar month may be twenty-nine or thirty days. He is also authentically reported

to have said: ﴾Do not fast (for Ramadan) before the coming of the month until you sight the moon or complete the number (of thirty days); then fast until you sight the moon or complete the number (of thirty days).﴿ It is useful here to note that he did not command us to refer to astronomical calculations and did not give permission to determine the beginning of a lunar month thereby.

Furthermore, it is stated by Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah be merciful to him) in a treatise he composed in this regard, vol. 25, page 132, excerpted from his book "Al-Fatawa", that scholars are unanimous that astronomical calculations may not be the basis of determining the beginnings and the end of lunar months. No doubt, Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah be merciful to him) was most knowledgeable regarding the issues on which there is consensus and other controversial issues. Furthermore, the great Hadith scholar Ibn Hajar reported in Fat-hul-Bari, vol. 4, page 127, on the authority of Abul-Walid Al-Baji that the Salaf (righteous predecessors) unanimously agreed that astronomical calculations is not given credit in this regard, a consensus which is binding for subsequent generations.

All authentic Hadith reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) indicate the same notion given by the abovementioned unanimous agreement.

This does not mean that I prohibit making use of observatories or telescopes to help sight the new moon. I just mean that we should not completely rely on them or make them the main determiner for the new moon sighting and that it can only be accredited unless authorized by observatories or

unless astronomical data confirm the rise of the new moon. In fact, this is groundless. Moreover, it is well-known to those acquainted with astronomy that astronomers often differ on whether a new moon is born or not and whether it is possible to sight it. Given that they once unanimously confirm whether it is born or not, their consensus cannot stand as a proof because they are not infallible but are all liable to be mistaken. However, consensus that is considered infallible and can be binding is that reached by the Salaf with regard to Shar`y (Islamically legal) issues, because it consists of the opinions of the victorious group for which the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) testified that they will remain holding fast to truth until the Day of Resurrection.

As for supporting their view by the occurrence of eclipse, it is a very weak plea, since there is no text in the Qur'an or the Sunnah stating that a lunar eclipse occurs only when the moon is full or that solar eclipse can take place only during the dark moon phase, as viewed by some astronomers. On the contrary, a group of scholars view that eclipse may happen at any time as stated above. Furthermore, many scholars view that it may occur on the day of `Eid-ul-Fitr (the Festival of Breaking the Fast) or `Eid-ul-Adha (the Festival of the Sacrifice). Definitely, these two days occur during neither the full moon nor dark moon phase. That said, the opinion of those who view that lunar eclipse only happens when the moon is full and solar eclipse occurs only during the dark moon phase is as hypothetical as the view that lunar and solar eclipses can happen at any

time. Thus, neither of these views deserve to be given credit and thus the Shar`y texts stand unopposed. No doubt, it is not beyond Allah's Omnipotence, and it is not out of the scope of Shari`ah possibilities, that lunar and solar eclipses occur at any time. This is because Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He) is absolutely Able to do anything and legislates and decrees nothing but out of perfect wisdom. Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated that solar and lunar eclipses are two signs amongst the signs of Allah through which He admonishes His servants who are in great need of being warned against the causes of punishment at all times. This notion in itself is a clear proof supporting the scholarly opinion that lunar and solar eclipses can happen at any time. Therefore, sighting the new moon that determined that the beginning of the Month of Ramadan for this year, 1407 A.H., will be Monday night was authorized by the permanent authority of the Supreme Judicial Council in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This is because the new moon was sighted in a Shar`y way and thus should be effective as it agrees with Shar`y evidence when opposing arguments are invalid. Accordingly, Tuesday will be the first day of the Month of Ramadan in accordance with the previous Hadith in addition to the following Hadith that reads: (The beginning of

Ramadan is on the day when you begin fasting, the end of Ramadan is on the day when you end it, and `Eid-ul-Adha is on the day when you sacrifice.) (Related by Al-Tirmidhy and others through a reliable chain of narrators.)

Supposing that Muslims made a mistake in determining the beginning or the end of a lunar month while depending on authentically reported Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), they will not be blamed. Rather, they will be rewarded and praiseworthy for relying on Allah's commandments and on authentically reported instructions of the Prophet (peace be upon him). However, if they do not rely thereon in favor of astronomical calculations or the occurrence of eclipses although sighting the moon determining the beginning or the end of a lunar month is based on valid Shar`y grounds, they will be sinful and greatly prone to the punishment of Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He) for not following the way of their Prophet and Imam Muhammad the son of `Abdullah (peace be upon him). Actually, Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He) warned them against doing so in the Ayah (Qur'anic verse) that reads: (And let those who oppose the Messenger's (Muhammad peace be upon him) commandment (i.e. his Sunnah — legal ways— orders, acts of worship, statements, etc.) (among the sects) beware, lest some Fitnah (disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquakes, killing, overpowered by a tyrant) should befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them.) To the same effect, He (Exalted and Glorified be He) said: (And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad peace be upon him) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it). And fear Allâh; verily, Allâh is Severe in punishment.) He, moreover, said: (And whosoever disobeys Allâh and His Messenger (Muhammad peace be upon him), and transgresses His limits, He will cast him into the Fire, to abide therein; and he shall have a disgraceful torment) .

I hope that my explanation above will be convincing for the seeker of truth and will refute

the argument raised by Dr. A. `A. L. and others who rely on astronomical calculations.

It is Allah Whom we ask to guide us, Dr. A. `A. L. and all Muslims to that in which there is goodness and prosperity for people and countries and to enable us to abide by the pure Shari`ah. We also ask Him to protect us and all Muslims against the evils of ourselves, our sinful acts and saying about Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He) and His Messenger (peace be upon him) that about which we have no knowledge, for indeed He is the One Able to do so. He is sufficient for us and the best Disposer of our affairs. May peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, his family, his Companions, and those who hold his Sunnah in a high esteem and follow his guidance till the Day of Judgment.

General Chairman of the Departments of Scholarly Research,

Ifta', Daw`ah, and Guidance

And Chairman of the Constituent Assembly

of Muslim World League in Makkah Al-Mukarramah (Makkah, the Honored)

201- Solar and Lunar Eclipses

Occur as an Admonishment from Allah

Question 1: Dear Eminent Sheikh. An article published recently in a newspaper stated that

there would be a total lunar eclipse shortly after sunset. This news came three days before the actual occurrence of the lunar eclipse. The writer of the article explained the reasons for this phenomenon and when it would begin and end. This raised some questions in the minds of people regarding the following established facts:

A- Lunar and Solar Eclipses are natural phenomena, because those who work at observatories can forecast the lunar eclipse some of days before its happening and they precisely determine its beginning and its end.

B- The Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) (commanded us in a narration **reported by Imam Muslim** on the authority of **'Aishah** to hasten to prayer during a lunar eclipse, and he said: "Then pray until it is over") .

C- It is reported by Al-Bukhari, on the authority of Asma', the daughter of Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with both of them) who said: (We were ordered to free bondsmen at the time of Lunar Eclipses.) -.

D- It is also reported in Fathul-Bari that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : (Indeed, the sun and the moon are two signs from

Allah, with which He admonishes His servants) .

Now the question is: why would the people be anxiously afraid of the Lunar Eclipse although it is merely a natural phenomenon that is forecast before its occurrence?

A: First of all, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated in an authentic Hadith that Solar and Lunar Eclipses are an admonishment from Allah, with which He exhorts His servants to consider these signs in order to fear Him [Exalted and Sublime Be He] and to be prompted to be mindful and dutiful to Him. Moreover, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated that the sun and the moon do not eclipse upon someone's death or birth. They are two signs from among the signs of Allah with which He alarms His servants and, therefore, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: (When you see the Eclipse, remember Allah and invoke Him.) Also, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated: (When you see the eclipse engage in prayer and invoke Allah until the it is over) .

He commanded us to glorify Allah, to emancipate bondsmen and to give in charity. All righteous acts such as prayer, remembrance of Allah, seeking His forgiveness, giving in charity, emancipating bondsmen, fear of Allah [Exalted and Sublime Be He] and avoiding things that make us liable for His punishment are all recommended to observe upon the occurrence of Eclipses.

Being a sign forecast by astronomical calculation does not negate its being a means of evoking the fear of Allah [Exalted and Sublime Be He] and warning us against His Punishment. It is He Who created such signs and decreed their reasons, such as causing the sun, the moon and the stars to rise and set at prescribed times, and all of them are of the signs of Allah [Exalted and Sublime Be He]. Allah has set the reasons and causes by which astronomers calculate the Eclipse, and this does not invalidate such signs as being a means of awakening the fear of Allah and warning people against His [Exalted and Sublime Be He] Punishment. All His phenomenal signs such as the sun, the moon, the stars, the heat and the cold inspire people to fear Allah and warning them against disobeying Him though He gave them all these blessings. Contemplation of the cosmic signs, of the lunar and the solar eclipses as well as other signs, warns against Allah's Punishment and makes them fear Him so that they are guided to His Path and shun what He has prohibited for them. If astronomers can often gain the knowledge of the causes and reasons of these phenomena, it does not devalue the signs of Allah, as astronomical calculations are prone to be right or wrong. However, in most cases, if the calculations are accurate, knowledge of this phenomenon

can be obtained. However, forecast of this phenomenon does not mean knowledge of the Unseen, because there are obvious scientific causes known to astronomers through the observation of the movement of the sun and the moon. Astronomers observe the phases of the sun and the moon and, therefore, know the exact phase in which lunar and solar eclipses will occur. The prior knowledge of this phenomenon does not deny what Allah has revealed to His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and commanded him to convey to people: to fear Allah, give in charity and other teachings. All these signs and phenomena are intended for the well-being of servants, so that they will fear Allah, be warned against His Punishment and to follow the upright path. Being foreseen by calculations does not underplay these blessings.

Q2: Doesn't the Publication of the News about Lunar Eclipse underplay its Significance?

A Leaving its publication would be better and more appropriate, so that people will be impacted by the occurrence of the eclipse and the fear of Allah will be awakened in them. Accordingly, people will earnestly strive hard to obey Allah [Exalted and Sublime Be He]. However, some astronomers assume that the promulgation of such news would rather urge people to prepare for witnessing the eclipse and not miss it out as a reminder of Allah's Power. For, when the eclipse occurs without people noticing it, then they will not experience its impact. But, if it is published in the newspapers, people will get ready for it and prepare themselves for its observation in its due time. This is mainly the aim of those who publish such news .

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Question 3: Does not the Forecast of the Lunar and Solar Eclipses mean Speculation about the Unseen and contradict the Islamic religious principles? May Allah protect you from all harm.

A Not at all. the great Muslim scholars proclaimed that lunar and solar eclipses are not part of the Unseen, since their occurrence can be predicted by expert astronomers as stated by Sheikhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, by Ibnul-Qayyim and other early scholars. Astronomers are well-acquainted with the phases of the moon and the sun through special methods which they have studied and mastered. Thus, it is not considered knowledge of the Unseen .

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Prayer For Sending Rain

202- Virtue Of The Prayer For Sending Rain

From 'Abdul 'Aziz Bin 'Abdullah Ibn Baz to any Muslim who reads this Fatwa. May Allah guide us all and grant us the means to make sincere repentance from all sins. Amen.

Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you. To proceed: :

As you know, may Allah bestow His Mercy upon us all, that the ruler of Muslims, may Allah protect and guard him, gave directions for offering the Rain Prayer in the morning of Monday, 7 Jumadal-Ula, 1408 A.H., because rain season is late this year and has not fallen in many places at its annually scheduled time. Muslims are in dire need of it, and they are desperately asking Allah to overwhelm them with His Mercy [Exalted and Sublime Be He], His Bounty and Kindness. He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] has

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guided them to invoke and implore Him so that He grants them their needs with His Grace. He, the Most Glorified, assured them of answering their supplications, as He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] said: ﴿And your Lord said: "Invoke Me, [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islâmic Monotheism) and ask Me for anything] I will respond to your (invocation). Verily! Those who scorn My worship [i.e. do not invoke Me, and do not believe in My Oneness, (Islâmic Monotheism)] they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!"﴾ and: ﴿And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright.﴾ In other verses, He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] said: ﴿Invoke your Lord with humility and in secret. He likes not the aggressors.﴾ ﴿And do not do mischief on the earth, after it has been set in order, and invoke Him with fear and hope. Surely, Allâh's Mercy is (ever) near to the good-doers﴾ .

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the early Muslims always turned to Allah seeking His Help in times of distress or adversity. He answered their invocations and granted them of His Bounties and Benevolence as He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] said regarding the Battle of Badr, ﴿(Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you (saying): "I will help you with a thousand of the angels each behind the other (following one another) in succession."﴾ .

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When drought intensified in Madinah and its suburbs, Muslims requested the Prophet (peace and

blessings of Allah be upon him) to pray for rain. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) then raised his hands while giving the Friday Sermon and prayed for rain and repeated his supplication twice. On another occasion he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) went out with them to the desert where he led them in two Rak'ahs prayer similar to the 'Eid prayer. He supplicated his Lord asking Him for rain. In this prayer he raised his hands and repeated the invocation many times and then inverted his garment. Following the example of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), Muslims also raised their hands in prayer and supplicated Allah. Then Allah sent down abundant rain, bestowed His Mercy upon them and removed their distress. He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] said: ﴿Indeed in the Messenger of Allâh (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the Meeting with) Allâh and the Last Day, and remembers Allâh much.﴾ One of the most important means of obtaining Allah's Mercy and being blessed with rain is fearing Allah [Exalted and Sublime Be He], turning to Him in repentance from all sins, promoting all what is right and forbidding all what is evil, cooperating in matters of piety and righteousness, holding mutual consultation for the sake of Allah, advising each other with the truth and being steadfast in implementing it, being compassionate to the poor and the needy, consoling them and being generous to them. Allah [Exalted and Sublime Be He] said: ﴿And if the people of the towns had believed and had the Taqwâ (piety), certainly, We should have opened for them blessings from the heaven and the earth﴾ till the end of the verse. He,

Most Glorified, said ﴿And whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty).﴾ He also said, ﴿and whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make his matter easy for him.﴾ He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] also said in another verse: ﴿Surely, Allâh's Mercy is (ever) near to the doers of good﴾ and: ﴿The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden); they perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give the Zakât, and obey Allâh and His Messenger. Allâh will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allâh is All-Mighty, All-Wise.﴾ .

In these noble verses, He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] explained that fearing Allah, being kind to Allah's servants and keeping upright and straight on the path of Allah are of the means of bringing about Allah's Mercy to His servants, His kindness to them, sending down rain and removing their distress. Therefore, fear Allah O servants of Allah! Be kind to His servants, and advise one another with truth and be steadfast and patient in doing so; cooperate among yourselves in acts piety and righteousness, promote what is right, forbid what is evil and repent altogether from all your sins. Hence your Sustainer [Exalted and Sublime Be He] will encompass you with His Mercy upon you and send down blessed rain for you. He will also give you

whatever you desire and withhold from you whatever you dislike. The Almighty said: ﴿And all of you beg Allâh to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful﴾ The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) advised us saying: ﴿"Whoever is not merciful to others will not be treated mercifully"﴾ In another Hadith he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated: ﴿The Most Compassionate (Allah) has mercy on those who are compassionate to people. If you show mercy to those on the earth, He Who is in the heaven will show mercy to you﴾ .

The Qur'anic verses and Prophetic Hadiths urging people to observe piety, uprightness, mercy and

kindness to those in need are many and well-known. I ask Allah to rectify the affairs of all Muslims; to grant them sincere repentance from all sins; to send down the rain for them out of His Grace and Bounty; to reconcile and unite their hearts on piety and good deeds; to protect everyone from the evils of their selves and to purify them from their sinful acts; to rid them of misguidance of tribulations; to support His Deen; to make His word the uppermost; to guide our rulers to what is good and beneficial for

people and countries; to correct the behavior of their advisors and enable them to do all kinds of good. Indeed, He is the Grantor of all this and is the Most Omnipotent. Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you.

President Of The Administrations Of

Scientific Researches, Ifta, Call and Guidance.

'Abdul 'Aziz Bin 'Abdullah Ibn Baz

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203- Usury And Its Damaging Effects

Praise be to Allah. May Prayers and Peace of Allah be upon His Messenger, Muhammad, upon his family, his companions and those who have followed him in guidance.

To proceed: We all have heard the discussions of this blessed council held under the auspices of his Eminence, Shaikh 'Abdul 'Aziz Bin 'Abdullah Al Ash-Shaykh and his Eminence Shaikh 'Abdullah Ibn Zayid concerning a very serious topic which people must carefully consider and be aware of. This is the topic of usury. Indeed, both eminent Shaikhs have done their best in benefiting the audience by explaining very important aspects of this topic that people need most. May Allah reward both of them with the best reward, multiply their recompense and increase both of them, us and all of you in knowledge, guidance and success.

Undoubtedly, the topic of usury is of great concern, and unfortunately many people have indulged in this sinful dealing. However, there are others who are very cautious not to fall in it by all means. Nonetheless, usury has spread and overflowed, and only a small percentage of Muslims are keeping aloof from it. It is reported in an authentic Hadith: ﴾A time will come upon people in which they will devour usury.

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It was said to the Prophet: O Messenger of Allah, will all people indulge in it? He said: He who does not devour it will get some of its dust﴿ Therefore, this matter is gravely serious due to the multitude of non-Islamic banks, the prevalence of carelessness, the weakness of people's faith and the intense greediness of people to accumulate more and more wealth in this life. In this council, you have heard a lot of good things and have gained many benefits. It is an obligation upon the believer to fear Allah (Exalted be He) regarding how he earns his income. A believer should concern himself with this subject and give it priority before anything else in order not to indulge in what Allah (Exalted be He) has prohibited.

As you heard, love for wealth is a natural instinct in man. But, it is a duty on the believer to guard and discipline this instinct in line with what has been ordained in the Shri'ah (Islamic Law) before he loses control over it and then one will fall into what Allah has prohibited. He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] says: ﴾And you love wealth with much love.﴿ He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] also says: ﴾And verily, he is violent in the love of wealth.﴿ referring to wealth. There is no doubt that wealth is so endeared to the soul and it is the means by which people satisfy their needs and be independent from others, in addition to many other benefits. However, the Muslim should be very careful about what Allah has prohibited and should not let his love for wealth overcome him to seek it through illegal

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means. It is reported in an authentic Hadith from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon

him) that he said: ﴿Man's feet will not move on the Day of Resurrection before he is asked about his life, how he spent it; his knowledge, how he did with it; his wealth, how he earned it and how he disposed of it; and about his body, how he wore it out.﴾ Therefore, a man will be questioned about all this on the Day of Resurrection. Furthermore, Allah (Exalted be He) condemned those who were disillusioned in this life by ephemeral rivalry in heaping worldly gains until they visit the grave. He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] says: ﴿The mutual rivalry (for piling up of worldly things) diverts you,﴾ ﴿Until you visit the graves (i.e. till you die).﴾ Meaning: until you are moved to the grave by death. It is noted that Allah (Exalted be He) calls death 'the visit to the grave' because grave are not the final abode of man, but there is another life beyond it. When people are taken to their graves, they are taken to stay there for a while and then they will get out and be brought before Allah (Exalted be He) for reckoning and requital. Then they will enter either Paradise or the Hell-Fire. This the final abode: Paradise for the righteous and Hell-Fire for the disbelievers and sinners. Thus, people are in a very risky situation; neither good nor bad. The sinner is in a very perilous position although he will not abide in Hell-Fire forever, if he dies on true monotheism and faith as viewed by Ahlis-Sunnah Wal-Jma'ah. However, he is still in danger of entering Hell-Fire due to his sins and bad deeds with which

he died. Of these sins is usury whose devourers Allah (Exalted be He) threatens with Hell-Fire as He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] says: ﴿whereas Allâh has permitted trading and forbidden Ribâ (usury).﴾ ﴿So whosoever receives an admonition from his Lord and stops eating Ribâ (usury) shall not be punished for the past; his case is for Allâh (to judge); but whoever returns [to Ribâ (usury)], such are the dwellers of the Fire - they will abide therein.﴾ It means that whoever goes back to deal in usury after the admonition had come to him, will be one of the denizens of Hell-Fire who will abide therein forever. This is a serious threat that the usurer will abide forever in Hell-Fire. It is to be noted that the one who deals in usury is of two types: The first type is the one who considers it lawful to deal in usury, and accordingly, engages in plain disbelief because of this. This person, we seek refuge with Allah, will abide in Hell-Fire forever along with the disbelievers. The one who considers usury as lawful and denies Allah's prohibition of it is a disbeliever, and as such, commits one of major sins in Islam because he permitted for himself what Allah (Exalted be He) made unlawful. Therefore, he becomes one of the disbelievers and His Islam is null and void. The one who regards as lawful adultery, usury, sodomy, disobedience to parents, robbery, and other heinous vices becomes unbeliever and takes the rulings of the apostates, if he clearly knows this prohibition, or when an argument has been established against him, if he is far away from the Muslim land and has no knowledge about that prohibition.

The second case is related to the one who does not consider usury as lawful, but his excessive love for wealth and his greed engage him in dealing in usury and he keeps dealing in it even after his knowledge of its prohibition. In this case, he is threatened of entering Hell-Fire and abiding therein forever

Nevertheless, his abiding in Hell-Fire is dissimilar to that of the disbelievers. It is a temporary stay which has an end.

Abiding in Hell-Fire is of two types: One type has no end and this is the state of the disbelievers, we seek refuge with Allah from that. They will never come out of it as Allah [Exalted and Sublime Be He] says: ﴿Thus Allâh will show them their deeds as regrets for them. And they will never get out of the Fire.﴾ He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] also says: ﴿They will long to get out of the Fire, but never will they get out therefrom; and theirs will be a lasting torment.﴾ We ask Allah for protection.

The second type of staying in Hell-Fire is the temporary stay which has an end, and this is the state of the sinners such as the one who commits suicide, the adulterer, the usurer and the like as you have heard in the recitation of Allah's [Exalted and Sublime Be He] saying: ﴾And those who invoke not any other ilâh (god) along with Allâh, nor kill such person as Allâh has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse﴿ Thereafter, He says: ﴾and whoever does this shall receive the punishment.﴿ ﴾The torment will be doubled to him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace;﴿ .

The polytheist, the killer and the adulterer are included in this verse. The polytheist will stay in Hell-Fire forever, we seek Allah's protection from that. However, the killer and the adulterer will stay in Hell-Fire temporarily

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as long as they did not consider killing and adultery as lawful. It is a stay which will come to an end.

Therefore, it is an obligation upon the believer to fear Allah, to be dutiful to Him and to keep away from usury against which Allah (Exalted be He) has warned His servants and declared war on those who deal in it if they do not desist indulging in it. He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] says: ﴾O you who believe! Be afraid of Allâh and give up what remains (due to you) from Ribâ (usury) (from now onward), if you are (really) believers.﴿ ﴾And if you do not do it, then take a notice of war from Allâh and His Messenger﴿ As you heard during the council, we have not come across another heinous sin that incurs this kind of threat or being described by Allah (Exalted be He) as waging war against Him except the sin of usury. We seek Allah's protection from that.

Thus, it is the duty of the Muslim to beware of what Allah (Exalted be He) has warned against. The sound-minded person should not be deceived by the people and say: 'the people commonly do it', because Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And most of mankind will not believe even if you desire it eagerly.﴿ He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] also says: ﴾And if you obey most of those on the earth, they will mislead you far away from Allâh's Path.﴿ Thus, falsehood is not the norm even though it might be common. Therefore, one has to follow the truth even if those who follow it are few in number. Moreover, one's love for wealth and one's greediness should not derive him to devour usury, or to get involved in cheating, deception, theft, robbery or any other sin.

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Love for wealth must be controlled by Shari'ah regulations, and whoever follows these regulations will be successful and Allah (Exalted be He) will bless what He has provided for him and will make him content with the minimum, not yearning for the maximum. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said in an authentic Hadith: ﴾Successful is the one who has entered the fold of Islam and is provided with sustenance which is adequately sufficient for his needs, and Allah makes him content with what He has bestowed on him.﴿ Reported by Imam Muslim in his Sahih. Greediness harms people and it bears no fruit for them. It also drives them to destructive paths, and therefore, one has to be cautious of this and should abide by the regulations of the Islamic Shari'ah with regard to what Allah (Exalted be He) has made lawful concerning one's way of earning his livelihood and other things. Due to the gravity of this matter, you heard during the council the recitation of his Excellency Sheikh 'Abdul 'Aziz Bin 'Abdullah when he recited Allah's [Exalted and Sublime Be He] saying: ﴾O you who believe (in the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism)! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with, and be grateful to Allâh﴿ In this verse Allah (Exalted be He) first mentioned eating things that are good and pure before He referred us to action; namely, thanking Him, since thankfulness to Allah (Exalted be He) is the required action from humans. This order

shows the danger and seriousness of earning one's livelihood through unlawful means, since eating illicit gains causes one's heart to be corrupted, diseased, hardened and eventually one is led to disbelief. There is no might nor power except with Allah. Therefore, a believer should fear Allah (Exalted be He) and be seeking only lawful gains. Allah (Exalted be He) says about the Messengers who were the most honored among people: ﴾O (you) Messengers! Eat of the Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl foods which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables, fruits, etc.] and do righteous deeds.﴿ The Messengers were the most honored among mankind and they did not indulge in unlawful earnings. However, in order to be a source of benefit for

people, to encourage them to obey Allah's Commands and to realize the gravity of the matter, Allah (Exalted be He) addressed the Messengers in this way, commanding them to seek things that are good and pure, so how about others?

Thus, it is an obligation upon the believer to seek things that are good and pure, to be very cautious about his food and drink and all his affairs in life and to make sure that he is getting them through all means that Allah (Exalted be He) has made lawful and to beware of what Allah (Exalted be He) has prohibited for him, of usury and other actions. Allah has declared usury prohibited, and by the same token one has to be careful not to earn his sustenance through unlawful means, such as bribery, cheating, robbery or any other illegal transactions. One has also to be heedful about all types of illicit wealth so that he eats only that which is lawful and acts according to all that which is virtuous. You have already learned in the discussion about the two types of usury:

Ribal-Fadl (i.e. usury of excess, selling an item for another of the same type, on the spot, but in excess) and Riban-Nasi'ah (i.e. usury of delay, conditional excess for delay of payment). Ribal-Fadl means exchanging two items of the same merchandise with an increase in one of them, such as selling one pound for two pounds, one dirham for two dirhams, one handful of rice for two handfuls of rice, or one handful of wheat for two handfuls of wheat. This is called Ribal-Fadl and it is forbidden in Islam, whether it is received immediately or delayed. Therefore, if two things of the same type are exchanged with an increase in one of them, then it is called 'Ribal-Fadl', such as exchanging one Saa' (1 Sa` = 2.172 kg) of wheat for one Saa' and a Mudd (Mudd is a dry measure of half bushel, 543 grams) of the same type of wheat, or one Saa' of wheat for one Saa' and a half of the same kind of wheat, or one Saa' of rice for one Saa' and a half or for two Saa's of rice, or one dirham for two dirhams, or one pound for two pounds, or one ornament worth ten pounds for an ornament worth eleven pounds or twelve pounds of gold, or any

other similar transactions. This type of usury is called 'Ribal-Fadl' and it is prohibited whether it is executed on the spot or delayed. If the transaction that includes usury is delayed, then this transaction involves the two types of usury, such as giving one Saa' of wheat for two Saa's of the same kind of wheat, or exchanging an ornament worth ten pounds for another worth fifteen or pounds on a deferred payment. This will include the two types of usury: Ribal-Fadl and Riban-Nasi'ah.

Riba Al-Nasi'ah is, as you have heard, the exchanging of one item of a given merchandise for another item of a different type of merchandise as a delayed transaction, such as selling silver for gold as conditioned with excess for delay payment, because these are two different things that are exchanged with a delayed transaction. Therefore, if one sells silver for gold, or one Saa' of wheat for two Saa's of barley, or one Saa' of wheat for two Saa's of rice, conditioned with a delay receipt in either of them, then this is called Riban-Nasi'ah, and in this case it will also include Ribal-Fadl which

exists when one sells gold for gold or rice for rice. But if one sells one Saa' of rice for two Saa's of barley with a delay receipt in either of them, then this will only be Riban-Nasi'ah. It is, however, allowed to sell one Saa' of wheat for two Saa's of barley with an immediate receipt of both goods, but if it is delayed, then it will have Riban-Nasi'ah. If one sells one Saa' of good type of wheat for two Saa's of bad type of wheat with a delay receipt of either of them, then it will include both types of usury: Ribal-Fadl and Riban-Nasi'ah. By the same token, if one extends a loan of one thousand riyals to be repaid later as one thousand and ten riyals, then this transaction includes

both Ribal-Fadl and Riban-Nasi'ah, because he did not immediately receive it from the borrower. If the time of repaying the loan is due the creditor says to the borrower: either you add interest to the balance or you should repay me now without interest. When the debtor is in straitened circumstances, he says to the creditor: I am in difficulty and I cannot repay you right now. Grant me time till it is easy for me to repay you the one thousand or two thousands (or whatever the amount he is indebted). I have no objection if you give me respite and you may add an interest to the loan. Then the creditor will grant him time, six months or one year, and increase the total sum of the loan by fifty riyals or one hundred riyals, or more or less, in return of the delay in repaying the loan.

Scholars unanimously agreed that both types of usury are prohibited: Ribal-Fadl and Riban-Nasi'ah. There was a difference of opinion among the righteous predecessors with regard to the prohibition of Ribal-Fadl, but it has been cleared. Thus, both types of usury are conclusively prohibited according to the consensus of opinion of the scholars because there are many Hadiths reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) banning this type of usury. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: ❪Gold is to be paid for by gold, silver by silver, wheat by wheat, barley by barley, dates by dates, and salt by salt, like for like and equal for equal, payment being made hand to hand. If these categories differ, then sell as you wish, provided that payment is made hand to hand❫ In this Hadith he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) explained that it is not allowed to sell one type of merchandise for its like except with immediate delivery and equal for equal. But if there is a difference in the category of merchandise, such as selling gold for silver or wheat for barley or salt or wheat for dates, then it is allowed on condition that the merchandise is received and the transaction is immediate and

they are of different types. Praise be to Allah, these issues are now clear, and thus a Muslim should be familiar with them and should adhere to them in his transactions.

Nowadays, the majority of transactions are based on loans and debts. Banks' diverse transactions, by giving people loans and by receiving deposits from them and then lending them to others. Their receiving deposits from people is a process of borrowing money, and giving them to others is a process of lending them to others. Dealing with usury in all these forms is prohibited in Islam. It is not allowed for the owners of a bank or other businessmen to lend money on interest, as it is not lawful for them to take out loans and pay interest on them. All these forms of usury are prohibited according to the unanimous opinion of Muslim scholars. Therefore, if people deposit their money in a bank on condition that it will give them an interest of %5 or %10 after one month or after one year, or more or less, then this usurious transaction is prohibited. This type of dealing, in fact, includes both Ribal-Fadl and Riban-Nasi'ah, because the bank gives them one thousand (i.e. the capital) and a delayed interest. Hence, it involves Ribal-Fadl and Riban-Nasi'ah.

Praise be to Allah, there are a plenty of Islamic banks nowadays, and we ask Allah the Almighty to increase their number and to guide those in charge of them to follow the right way in managing them and to safeguard them from the evil insinuations of Satan and from those who invite to Hell-Fire.

These banks have fierce enemies and opponents, because the owners of usurious banks are not pleased with the successful foundation of the Islamic banks and want to damage their reputation as much as they can, so that usurious banks can thrivingly continue devouring interest. Therefore, Praise be to Allah, Islamic banks

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should be supported, aided and encouraged to the best of our ability, regardless of any mistake or shortcomings they may have fallen in. Any mistakes or shortcomings in these banks should be meticulously reformed and their managers should be directed towards goodness and assisted to apply the aspects of reform so that they will serve people and relieve them from the usurious banks. Muslims will then be able to safely deposit their money in Islamic banks. Moreover, we have reviewed the statutory foundation of some of these Islamic banks and it has been inspected by the council of honored scholars in this country, and the majority of them agreed that these banks are usury-free and their transactions are good. These are some of the banks which we have reviewed. Moreover, they have a consulting juristic committee to which transactions are referred and it approves what it finds conforming to the Islamic Shari'ah and bans what is not. It is to be noted that this committee is not infallible and its member scholars are also not infallible either. They are prone to making mistakes like other people. Nevertheless, such banks, at least, seek to abide by Islamic law and promote Islamic transactions. They follow the system of speculation in which they buy merchandise and sell it with some profit, and pool whatever profit they have achieved and divide them among the shareholders. This is a well-known policy in Islamic banks. Of course, these Islamic banks have enemies and opponents and therefore, they should be encouraged and taken care of. Those in charge of them should be offered advice and taken well care of. All possible efforts must be exerted to protect them and to keep them away from anything that contradicts pure Islamic Shari'ah. Whenever something in discordance with the Shari'ah is discovered in their dealings, and the assiduous seeker of knowledge comes across it, he should guide, advise and direct the managers as much as he can in compliance with the Islamic principle of

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cooperation in acts of piety and righteousness. You have also heard about the things related to At-Tawarruq Transaction which some of the masses call: Al-Wa'dah Transaction. Jurists call it At-Tawarruq (Tawarruq sale is selling by installments, then the purchaser sells the product to a third party for cash), and it is allowed according to the view of a group of scholars. Its permissibility is agreed upon by the majority of Muslim jurists. In fact, this transaction helps to shun dealing with usury and to satisfy one's needs without resorting to usury. Its legitimacy is conspicuous according to the rulings of the Shari'ah and it is implied in Allah's (Exalted be He) saying: ﴾O you who believe! When you contract a debt for a fixed period, write it down.﴿ .

A person in need might be pushed either to undertake this form of transaction or to deal with usury, since not everyone in need finds a creditor to give him a loan or a charity. Therefore, the person in need resorts to this type of transaction on order to pay off a debt, to help with marriage costs, to build a house or to to help with any other compelling matter. Thus, he buys something like a car, a piece of land, sugar, some raw material or any other merchandise on a delayed payment and then sells it for cash in order to make some profit and meet his needs. It is noteworthy that this person has no initial interest to benefit from the merchandise itself, but he seeks to benefit from its profit to meet his pressing needs. This type of transaction is sometimes undertaken by merchants. A merchant might buy

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certain merchandise, with no interest in using or benefit from the merchandise itself, but to sell it in order to cover some expenses. He already arranges with a client who needs this merchandise and will buy it. Thus, the merchant buys this merchandise to sell it to others. This type of transaction is not prohibited, because the merchant buys the merchandise not to use it, but to sell it. By the same token, a person in need buys this merchandise to sell it in order to meet his needs. However, as you heard during the council, there are some people who sometimes do not follow the legal rulings when dealing in such transactions, and this is where flaws can find their way into At-Tawarruq Transaction. The rule is that the seller should sell only the merchandise which he already owns, not that which he does not possess, such as selling merchandise while it is still in the possession of other merchants. This is because the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: (Do not sell what you do not possess.) In another Hadith he said: ("It is not lawful to contract a loan conditional to a sale (together), or to sell what you do not own.") Therefore, it is not allowed for a person to sell goods while they are still in the possession of another merchant, as it is not allowed to ask for their price before handing them to the buyer by saying: 'Give me their price'. This is not lawful either. This type of transaction is wrong, since the buyer must first possess the merchandise and then he can sell it any time thereafter, e.g., on the same day or one or two days after possessing it. This is the correct way to conduct this transaction. Thus, the flaw may happen from the buyer or the seller in the way they conduct this transaction, otherwise,

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the transaction itself is legally valid. This is according to the preponderant opinion of Muslim jurists, although a minority of other jurists did not approved it. However, according to the majority view of Muslim scholars, it is permissible to deal in it, provided that the seller should sell only what he owns and is in his possession. By the same token, the buyer should not be hasty to sell it before its receipt and possessing it. Once he has possessed it, then he is permitted to sell it to anyone except the one from whom he originally bought it so as to avoid falling in Al-'Inah Transaction (sale with immediate cash repurchase for profit). He should sell it to others, but without engaging in collusion; i.e. he must possess it first and then he may sell it in the market, in his house or in any other place which Allah (Exalted be He) makes easy for him in order to meet his needs. This is what is called At-Tawarruq Transaction or Al-Wa'dah Transaction. On the other hand, some people might involve in an illegal act in Al-Wa'dah Transaction. This sometimes happens when the buyer does not pay the price in cash immediately to the seller and thus, the latter tries to beguile the buyer into increasing the price. The seller can not grant the buyer time in paying off the price in return of increasing the balance, for, this would blatantly make him involve in the form of usury that was practiced in the pre-Islamic period, and as such the buyer will be disgraced among his fellow Muslims. Therefore, in order to circumvent this situation he resorts to one of two stratagems. The first one is that he convenes a fake contract which includes interest. For example, if the debt is three thousand pounds, they conclude a contract considering the debt as three thousand and six hundred pounds. They try to conceal the sin from the people, but Allah (Exalted be He) watches over all what they do. Allah (Exalted be He) knows what is hidden in the hearts and with Him is the knowledge and the reality of everything. Such ill-willed conduct is one of the most deceptive sins and heinous vices. We seek refuge with Allah from it. The second stratagem is that they conclude a contract which they call

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a 'mending contract'. They make a new contract and call it a 'mending' or 'reversion' of the debt. For example, the creditor says: O so and so! You have not paid me the price. The time of settling the debt has fallen and you have not paid me. The debtor says: I have nothing to give you, I am unable to pay right now. Give me respite. The creditor then says: No! I can not grant you respire. But you may buy other merchandise from me for a delayed payment and sell it. Then you can repay me the

first debt. Thus, he reverts the debt which by time piles up and excessively increases. Accordingly, if the debt was three or four thousand, then the creditor strikes a new deal with the debtor and sells him more goods for five or six thousand on a delayed payment. Then the debtor (the buyer) sells them and gives the creditor their price as a repayment of the first debt. This is an evil dealing, because the creditor unfairly forced the debtor to conduct this second transaction, and this is what they call 'mending' and repayment of the debt. In fact, although it is a way of repaying the debt, it is illegal circumvention. The creditor receives interest indirectly, wrongs his brother and does not give him respite. Whereas, Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿And if the debtor is in a hard time (has no money), then grant him time till it is easy for him to repay﴾ Moreover, as you have heard during the council, the one dealing with people in transactions should be lenient and honest in his dealings. This is one of the ways by which Allah (Exalted be He) blesses and protects his wealth, and it is also a means to allow the debtor to repay the debt with a magnanimous spirit and an unburdened soul. Therefore, being lenient to people, not overbearing them with what they are unable to afford and avoiding exaggeration in the profit are all ordained by Allah (Exalted be He) and are among the trade ethics which He loves His servants to adhere to. This also makes it easy for the debtor to repay his debt quickly and clear his soul from the evil thoughts of harbouring grudge against

his Muslim brother. Thus, being tolerant in this regard and avoiding making unduly excessive profit, being satisfied with three percent or two percent or a closer percentage, makes prompts the debtor to quickly repay his debt with a pleasant and happy soul. On the other hand, if the debtor remembers that the creditor has burdened him with too much debts, then it will be difficult for him to repay and will hold in his heart something against the creditor because he took advantage of his adversity and his need, even though originally there is no certain limit for the ratio of profit. People conventionally agree on different ratios of profits. Some people are quick in repaying their debts, and accordingly, merchants are satisfied with less profit from them. Others delay the repayment of their debts and sometimes do not repay them at all. In this case, the merchants increase the profits on them. Furthermore, the time of the maturation of a debt varies from one person to another. Sometimes the time is short, and thus, the profit is less, and in other occasions it is long, and thus, the profit will be increased. It is reported that the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) bought one camel for two camels from the camels of charity.

The point is that transactions are judged by the different situations of the people. However, the creditor or owner of the property is morally obligated to be lenient with his brothers; to make a way out for them; to make it easy for them; and to make less but appropriate profit in order to encourage them to repay the debts and be grateful for his act by repaying the debt with a pleasant and happy soul. We ask Allah for success and guidance for all. And we ask Him to purify the hearts of our fellow Muslim, to amend their deeds and actions, to protect them from the evils of their souls

and the vices of Satan, to help them follow the true Islamic legislation, to keep us away from the evils of usurious banks, to guide those in charge of them to adhere to the right path and to abandon usury which Allah has prohibited for them, to guide those in authority to remove usury with all its types of to care and facilitate for Muslims dealing with successful Islamic banks which help them obey Allah (Exalted be He) and keep them away from what He has prohibited. Indeed, He is Bounteous and Generous. Once again, I thank the two eminent Shaikhs for the efforts they have exerted in this council and for their eloquent and beneficial talks. May Allah reward them with the best reward and increase them in goodness. May Allah guide us all to that in which there is our well-being, guidance and deliverance from all types of evils. Indeed, He is All-Hearing and Near. May Allah send His Peace and Blessings upon His Prophet Muhammad, upon his family, and all his companions. There is no

might nor power except with Allah.

204- Exhortation to piety

and uprightness in Din

A meeting of the editorial board of "Al-Muslimoon" newspaper with His Eminence, Shaykh 'Abdul-'Aziz Ibn Baz .

We would like your Eminence, our father, Shaykh 'Abdul-'Aziz Ibn Baz to give us instruction regarding our duties and responsibilities, which will help us convey our message and carry out our responsibilities in sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills).

Praise be to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger, his family and Companions and those who followed them in piety and righteousness.

It gives me great pleasure to advise my Muslim fellows everywhere, particularly the editorial board of "Al-Muslimoon" newspaper, to fear Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), be upright and straight on His Din (religion of Islam), mutually recommend each other to truth and perseverance wherever they might be. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwâ (virtue, righteousness and piety)﴿ and:

﴾By Al-'Asr (the time).﴿ ﴾Verily, man is in loss,﴿ ﴾Except those who believe (in Islâmic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth [i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf) which Allâh has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar which Allâh has forbidden], and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allâh's Cause during preaching His religion of Islâmic Monotheism or Jihâd).﴿

Therefore, my advice to all Muslims is to act in accordance with the concepts embodied in this great Surah, as it indicates that all mankind is in loss ﴾Except those who believe (in Islâmic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth [i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf) which Allâh has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar which Allâh has forbidden], and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allâh's Cause during preaching His religion of Islâmic Monotheism or Jihâd).﴿ These are the winners from among Jinn and Mankind, Arabs and non-Arabs, males and females. Those who believe in Allah and His Messenger and believe in what Allah has revealed about the Hereafter, Paradise and Hell-Fire, etc. They believe the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in what he informed regarding the Hereafter, Paradise, Hell-Fire and everything else. They then endorse their faith with action, and accordingly perform the duties of Allah; including but not limited to prayer, and other obligations, avoid the prohibitions of Allah and practice mutual advice, calling others to the Din of Allah, enjoin what is right, forbid what is evil and recommend one another to be patient. These are

the successful, true believers and also the trustworthy. This is cooperation in righteousness and piety and this is the way of the believers about whom Allah states: ﴾The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden); they perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give the Zakât, and obey Allâh and His Messenger. Allâh will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allâh is All-Mighty, All-Wise.﴿

This is also the way of the believers. They are allies and supporters of each other, they advise one another and mutually cooperate in piety and righteousness. They neither wrong, betray, plot against, or cheat one another. These are allies and supporters of one another. This is indeed how true believers act, and that is why they are the allies of Allah.

Thus, my advice to Muslims everywhere, Arabs and non-Arabs, Jinn and Mankind is to fear Allah, to cooperate in piety and righteousness and to be allies and supporters among themselves, loving one another for the sake of Allah, propagating virtue and preventing vice, and recommending one another to truth and to patience in upholding it, wherever they might be. They must hope for the Grace and Bounty of Allah and His kindness, and fear His (Glorified and Exalted be He) punishment and Wrath. Such is the case of the believers and the truthful, wherever they may be. They seek sound understanding of Islam, and mutually advise one another for the sake of Allah and His servants. Seeking knowledge helps people gain a sound understanding of their Din. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم): "This is my way; I invite unto Allâh (i.e. to the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism) with sure knowledge﴿ .

Therefore, it is obligatory to seek knowledge as Allah states: ﴾It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allâh.﴿ this verse means that only the learned, the messengers and their followers are the ones who completely fear Allah.

Hence, it is obligatory upon you, O male and female Servants of Allah, to learn and understand the Din and to observe Allah Commandments and avoid His Prohibitions. Advise one another, cooperate in piety and righteousness, enjoin what is right and forbid what is evil. More importantly, you should take care of your families, children, spouses and all family members, whom you should advise for the sake of Allah. You should command them to enjoin what is right, to forbid what is wrong and to be steadfast. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾O you who believe! Ward off yourselves and your families against a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones﴿ and: ﴾And enjoin As-Salât (the prayer) on your family, and be patient in offering them [i.e. the Salât (prayers)].﴿ In another verse He (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾And mention in the Book (the Qur'ân) Ismâ'îl (Ishmael). Verily he was true to what he promised, and he was a Messenger, (and) a Prophet.﴿ ﴾And he used to enjoin on his family and his people As-Salât (the prayers) and the Zakât and his Lord was pleased with him.﴿ Therefore, it is the duty of every believer to look after

their families, to strive hard to mend their affairs, to guide them to goodness, and command them to do right and forbid them to do wrong.

Similarly, women must fear Allah in their homes and look after their families, especially when they are the only responsible persons at home, in case of having no husband to share the responsibility with them. In this case, a woman is more responsible, but if there is a man to share this responsibility, then she should cooperate with him - be he her husband, her father, or her brother - in order to mend household affairs; to guide all the members of the family to be upright on the Din of Allah, to perform all duties assigned to them by Allah - such as prayers and other obligations -, to guard against prohibited acts and to observe the limits set by Allah. I advise "Al-Muslimoon" newspaper staff and those in charge of it to fear Allah, and strive hard to publish what benefits people and protects them from any harm.

It is the duty of all journalists to publish what benefits people in their worldly affairs and in the Hereafter, and to be careful of publishing anything harmful, either in worldly or in religious matters.

We ask Allah to grant guidance and success to us all and to make His Din victorious and His Word uppermost, and to mend the affairs of Muslims everywhere. We also ask Him to place the best amongst in charge of their affairs and to rectify affairs of their rulers and leaders. I also invoke Him (Glorified and Exalted be He) to guide our rulers to all that is good, to support them in their striving for goodness,

to make truth victorious at their hands, and to make us, you, and them among those who guide and are guided to the Right Path. Indeed, He is All-Hearing and Ever-Near. May Allah send His Prayers and Peace upon His Servant and Messenger, our Prophet Muhammad, his family, Companions and those who follow them in piety and righteousness.

Editor in Chief:

Dear Eminent Father, on behalf of my fellows and in the name of "Al-Muslimoon" newspaper I thank you for giving us the opportunity to hear your advice and benefit from you. However, we would like to present to you what we face in reality when we contact with those who read our newspaper in the Muslim world. We hope that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) will record this in the balance of your good deeds on the Day of Resurrection.

Dear Eminent Father: We are used to this meeting every year. We ask Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) to bless you with health and protection, to prolong your life in His obedience by His Permission and to benefit us through your advice.

Our fellows have some questions which they wish to present to your Eminence. We hope, Allah Willing, that your answers to these questions will illuminate the way for them in dealing with the different issues concerning Muslims. If you allow us, we would like to ask the following:

Q: Dear Eminent Father, we know that the overall reformation of the affairs of the Muslim community is linked to the correction of their belief. However, this issue requires explanation from your Eminence

How does the correction of belief and its freedom from blemishes lead to the reformation

of the Muslim community's affairs; namely worldly and religious affairs?

A: When beliefs are sound and correct, all the affairs of people will be rectified. As long as one has sound and correct beliefs and is upright on the Din of Allah, the means of happiness will be achieved. True and sound belief involves believing that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) Alone is He Who deserves to be worshipped and that there is no god but He, and that no one should be worshipped except Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). One must also believe that Allah is the Lord of all, the Creator of all and that He is their Sustainer and the All-Knowing (Glorified and Exalted be He). It also involves the belief that He is above His Throne, that He is the Lord of everything, and that none is like unto Him, and that none can be compared to Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). Allah (Exalted be He) states: ﴾The Most Gracious (Allâh) rose over (Istawâ) the (Mighty) Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty).﴿ He (Glorified be He) also states: ﴾Indeed your Lord is Allâh, Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days, and then He rose over (Istawâ) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty). He brings the night as a cover over the day, seeking it rapidly, and (He created) the sun, the moon, the stars subjected to His Command. Surely, His is the Creation and Commandment. Blessed is Allâh, the Lord of the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists)!﴿ Thus, He (Glorified be He) is far above and over all things, He is the Most High and the Most Great, as He (Exalted be He) states: ﴾So the judgement is only with Allâh, the Most High, the Most Great!﴿

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Therefore, He is above the Throne and above all the creation, and His knowledge extends everywhere. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾He knows the secret and that which is yet more hidden.﴿ He knows all the affairs of the servants, and hence, we must believe that He (Glorified be He) is above His Throne and that He over all the creation and his knowledge extends everywhere. Moreover, it is obligatory to believe that He (Glorified and Exalted be He) is the only One deserving to be worshipped. The Almighty states: ﴾That is because Allâh — He is the Truth (the only True God of all that exists, Who has no partners or rivals with Him), and what they (the polytheists) invoke besides Him, it is Bâtil (falsehood).﴿ Such a belief that Allah Alone is worthy of being worshipped is preached by all the Messengers of Allah. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴿ He (Exalted be He) also says, ﴾And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).﴿ and: ﴾O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allâh)﴿ Thus, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) created us only to worship Him and commanded us to perform this worship, sending Messengers to maintain this Message. Therefore, we have to believe that He Alone is worthy of being worshipped

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and that He is the Sustainer of His Slaves. Thus, no one is to be invoked except Allah, no one should be sought for help but Him, no one should be relied upon but Him, and no one should be prayed to but Him. Likewise, offering sacrifices, fasting and pilgrimage should be performed only for His Sake. The Almighty (Exalted be He) states: ﴾O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allâh)﴿ and: ﴾And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.﴿ In another verse He (Glorified be He) states: ﴾And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him)﴿ .

As for simple matters which can be done by living fellow humans, there is no harm in seeking their help in this regard. Thus, we may seek the help of a living persons who are present with regard to

the things which they can do for us. There is no harm to say: My brother, help me to do such and such a thing, such repairing one's house or fixing one's car, while such a person is present. This can also occur through a message of a phone call. There is no harm in doing any of these things, as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states regarding the story of Prophet Moses (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): ﴾The man of his (own) party asked him for help against his foe﴿ Thus, there is no harm in mutual cooperation among the people who are present and are able to help one another, or to seek the help of those who are absent by sending them messages. As for calling upon the dead, or calling upon an absent person believing that they have knowledge of the Unseen; or that so an so hears through no physical

means of hearing, or calling upon idols or Jinn and seeking their help, this is association of partners with Allah in Lordship and in worship which nullifies the testimony of faith: There is no god but Allah. Therefore, it is an obligation to believe that He (Glorified and Exalted be He) Alone deserves to be worshipped ﴾And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.﴿ One must also believe that He (Glorified and Exalted be He) is the Creator and the All-Knowing. He Alone is the Creator of all creation and He Alone is the Lord of all creation. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾Surely, His is the Creation and Commandment.﴿ and: ﴾Indeed, your Lord is Allâh, Who created the heavens and the earth﴿ He (Glorified be He) is the Only Creator and the All-Knowing. There is no Lord but Him and and there is no Creator except Him, and only He is deserves to be worshipped, as He (Exalted be He) states: ﴾And your Ilâh (God) is One Ilâh (God - Allâh), Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (there is none who has the right to be worshipped but He), the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.﴿ He (Glorified be He) also states: ﴾And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him)﴿ It is also an obligation to achieve the third type of Monotheism which is Tawhid-ul-Asma' wal-Sifat (Oneness of Allah's Names and Attributes). It is the belief that His (Glorified be He) are the Most Beautiful Names and Sublime Attributes as is confirmed

in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). All such Names and Attributes must be confirmed as the True Qualities of Allah in a proper manner without Tahrif (distortion of the meaning), Ta`til (negation of the meaning or function of Allah's Attributes) or Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation). For, Allah (Glorified be He) states: ﴾There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.﴿ He (Glorified be He) also says, ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One﴿ ﴾ "Allâh-us-Samad (السيد الذي يصمد إليه في الحاجات) [Allâh the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks)].﴿ ﴾He begets not, nor was He begotten. And there is none co-equal or comparable to Him﴿ Moreover, He (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾So put not forward similitudes for Allâh (as there is nothing similar to Him, nor He resembles anything). Truly! Allâh knows and you know not.﴿ This is the belief of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (adherents to the Sunnah and the Muslim mainstream which entails three aspects of belief in the Oneness of Allah:

1- Belief that He (Glorified be He) is the Creator, the All-Knowing. That He is the Creator of all things. This is called Tawhid-ul-Rububiyyah .

2 - Belief that only He (Glorified be He) deserves to be worshipped and that worship is His Absolute Right, to the exclusion of anyone else. Accordingly, no one is to be called upon or sought for help except Him, and no one should offer prayer except to Him, etc. This is called Tawhid-ul-Uluhiyyah. .

3- Belief in His Names and Attributes and that no one is like unto Him (Glorified be He), no one can be compared to Him and there is no partner with Him, and it is obligatory to affirm His Names and Attributes as is stated in the Qur'an and authentic Sunnah of the Messenger (peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him)

in the proper manner without Tahrif, Ta`til or Tamthil. This belief should be in accordance with Allah's (Glorified be He) statement: ﴾There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.﴿ .

Q: Dear Eminent Father, nowadays, there are some people who say that Oneness of Allah is of four types. They claim that the fourth type is called Tawhid-ul-Hakimiyyah (i.e. Oneness of Judgment). Is this true?

A: Oneness of Allah is not classified into four types, but rather it consists of only three types as is confirmed by scholars. The Tawhid-ul-Hakimiyyah is included within Tawhid-ul- `Ubudiyyah (the Oneness of Worship). Therefore, judging according to what Allah has legislated, offering prayer, fasting, alms giving and pilgrimage are all included within Tawhid-ul- `Ubudiyyah.

Q: What should a Muslim do regarding recent developments, such as the issue of cloning ?

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A: It is an obligation upon the Muslim to apply pure legislation as a criterion in judging all things, and thus to approve of the new developments which are in consonance with Allah's Book (i.e. the Qur'an) and the authentic Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). So, whatever conflicts with these two sources must be rejected, as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴿And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it).﴾ He (Glorified be He) also says: ﴿(And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allâh and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم), if you believe in Allâh and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.﴾ As for cloning, it is a baseless falsehood, and it must not be practiced, neither with humans nor with any other creatures.

Q: Dear Eminent Father, the entire Muslim world is experiencing two major problems which have very dangerous social effects: the issue of marriage and raising the age of marriage, and the problem of divorce. With regard to the problem of raising the age of marriage, there are frightening statistics in the Muslim World, year after year, which confirm the increase in the number of singles from both genders due to economic and other reasons. Similarly, the problem of divorce is worsening as is the difficulty of getting married in that the number of divorced men and women is increasing to the point that

it is confirmed that divorces in one large Muslim country has risen by two million in one year?

A: Actually, marriage and divorce are supposed to involve no problems, but such problems occur due to the ignorance of the people, their lack of sound Islamic knowledge, the rise of irascibility and decline of patience. It is obligatory upon men to hasten to get married if they can afford it. They should not demand excessive dowries and wedding costs so that the number of marriages increase and the number of the singles decreases, and thus the number of spinsters will grow less. However, due to ignorance, greediness and dissatisfaction with simple life, dowries and expenditures for weddings have become exorbitant, except for those whom Allah wills. That is why marriages have

decreased, as this cannot be afforded by everyone.

Therefore, it is an obligation upon the believers to cooperate in this matter, to tolerate each other and avoid the high cost of marriage in order to increase the number of marriages and to reduce the number of singles and spinsters. This is obligatory upon all Muslims, as it is to refrain from divorce, to treat one's spouse kindly and to avoid wronging our partners and denying them any of rights. The duty of the wife to be modest and to avoid angering her husband or harming him. She should be humble and should use kind and soft words when dealing with her husband in order not to irritate him and drive him to divorce her. It is authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah

be upon him) that he stated: ﴾O young people! Whoever among you is able to marry, should marry, for marriage helps to lower the gaze and maintain one's chastity. Whoever is not able to marry, is recommended to fast, for fasting diminishes the sexual drive.﴿ Agreed upon its authenticity .

Likewise, it is ordained for the husband to fear Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and not hasten to pronounce divorce. Rather, he should be patient and should solve problems using wisdom, kind words, and good manner and not be oppressive. Woman, on the other hand, should fear Allah, avoid provoking the husband by asking for divorce, carry out her duties and responsibilities and treat her husband kindly, just as the husband should treat her kindly. Allah's (Glorified be He) states: ﴾and live with them honourably.﴿ He (Glorified and Exalted be He) also states: ﴾And they (women) have rights (over their husbands as regards living expenses) similar (to those of their husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect) to what is reasonable, but men have a degree (of responsibility) over them.﴿ Both spouses should be patient and seek the reward from Allah in all their affairs as Allah (Glorified be He) states: ﴾Only those who are patient shall receive their reward in full, without reckoning.﴿ Hence, there has to be patience and cooperation in piety and righteousness, following Allah's (Glorified and Exalted be He) statement: ﴾Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwâ (virtue, righteousness and piety)﴿ ,

and applying the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) statement: ﴾Treat women kindly; they are like prisoners in your hands.﴿ In another narration he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated: ﴾If you wish to benefit from her, benefit from her while crookedness remains in her; and if you attempt to straighten her, you will break her; and breaking her is divorcing her.﴿ Therefore, men should be patient towards the misbehavior of women and women should be patient regarding the mistakes, shortcomings and other deficiencies of their husbands.

Both parties should cooperate in piety and righteousness. The husband should patiently endure his wife's shortcomings, fear Allah, treat his wife kindly and recognize her rights and fulfill his duties towards her. Similarly, the wife should bear with patience, fulfill her obligations and responsibilities in order to avoid divorce. We ask Allah for guidance for all of us and all Muslims.

End of volume thirty from the Fatwas and Articles of His Eminence Shaykh 'Abdul 'Aziz Bin 'Abdullah Ibn Baz (may Allah be merciful to him), and the present collection concludes this volume. Allah Willing, it will be followed by general tables of contents for this collection. May Allah send His Peace and Blessings upon our Prophet Muhamamd, his family and Companions.